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REV. JOHN HALL, D. D.

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THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

A CHRISTIAN HOME:

HOW TO MAKE AND HOW TO MAINTAIN IT.

BY

JOHN HALL, D.D.,

NEW YORK.

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"First God's love,
And next," he smiled, "the love of wedded souls,
Which still presents that mystery's counterpart,
Sweet shadow-rose, upon the water of life.
Of such a mystic substance, Sharon gave
A name to! human, vital fructuous rose,
Whose calyx holds the multitude of leaves,
Loves filial, loves fraternal, neighbor-loves,
And civic, all fair petals, all good scents,
All reddened, sweetened, from one Central Heart."

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

The story of this little book is easily told. The editor of the publications of the American Sunday-School Union asked me to suggest a writer who could furnish such a work as would serve the end contemplated in the generous provision made under the Fund created in accordance with the bequest of the late John C. Green.

I indicated the minister whom I deemed—from his knowledge, experience and style of religious life—best fitted for the work. After careful deliberation he concluded that his duties made it impossible for him to assume the responsibility.

The Union then, over-estimating my fitness for the work, invited me to undertake it, kindly allowing ample time. It was not, however,

until the last summer, when I was detained by other duties in the city, and when the absence of most of the people cut off the pleasant work of pastoral visitation, that it was possible to give it proper attention. The effort has been to produce a truthful and useful rather than a learned or brilliant book. The divine word, such acquaintance with human nature as a minister gains, and deep sympathy with one's kind—these have been drawn upon, and the result is sent forth with the hope that God who "setteth the solitary in families" will use it to enforce the importance of founding and maintaining family life upon the principles declared in his word and by his providential government. Then it will have accomplished the purpose of the writer, of the national society that seeks the highest good of the young, and of the generous donor whose own life was eminently consistent and elevated.

J. HALL.

NEW YORK, *November*, 1883.

THE JOHN C. GREEN FUND BOOKS.

The preparation of this volume has been secured under the provisions of the John C. Green Fund, founded in 1877.

By the deeds of gift and of trust on behalf of the residuary legatees of the estate of John C. Green to the American Sunday-School Union, among other things, it is provided that one-sixth of the net interest and income of this Fund, shall be set aside and applied by the Board of Officers and Managers of the American Sunday-School Union, for the purpose of aiding them in securing a Sunday-school literature of the highest order of merit, either by procuring works upon a given subject germane to the objects of the society, to be written or compiled by authors of established reputation and known ability, or by offering premiums for manuscripts suitable for publication by the Union, in accordance with the objects of its institution, in such form and manner as the Board may determine.

The premium plan is to be followed at least once out of every three times.

It is further provided that the manuscripts thus procured become the exclusive property of the society, with no charge to purchasers for copyright, and with the intent to reduce the selling price of any book issued under the provisions of the Fund.

Being thus modestly and soberly trained, and rather made subject by thee to her parents than by her parents to thee, when she had arrived at a marriageable age she was given to her husband, whom she served as her lord. And she busied herself to gain him to thee, preaching thee unto him by her behavior; by which thou madest her fair and reverently amiable, and admirable unto her husband.—CONFESSIONS OF AUGUSTINE, book ix., ch. ix. (concerning his mother).

A CHRISTIAN HOME.

CHAPTER I.

THE FAMILY—ITS EARLY HISTORY.

The family and the community—Houses not homes—The right spirit—The family precedes society—Man and woman—Marriage divine—Why a religious rite—Yet not a sacrament—Its civil side—Polygamy—Patriarchal experiences—Mixed marriages—Social barriers against—Solomon's folly—Jezebel's influence—Ezra's difficulties—Principles running on into the New Testament—Marrying "in the Lord."

In some points of view the community is made up of the individuals whom it includes. The population of a city is the number of separate persons the city contains. But, on the side of its moral character, the community is made up of the families within it, and what they are as to purity, order and religion the community will be. In most great cities there are districts in which the families are few in comparison with the number of individuals. Such districts are commonly the haunts

of criminals, and even the value of the property is usually lowered as the result. In such places there are houses but not homes, dwellings but not families.

As is the moral influence in families, properly so called, such, in time, will the community become. The right condition of the family constitution and relations is, therefore, vital to the welfare of society; and in a nation like ours—constantly receiving from other lands accessions to its numbers, with their separate formative influences—it is all-important that the institution which preceded civil society and underlies its arrangements should be kept in its place and practically dealt with, according to the divine will.

Christian people, while they should strive to have the civil law under which they live in harmony with the divine, cannot always realize their aim; but in the regulation of their own lives they are never voluntarily to disregard the divine requirements. Our question is not to be, What can I do without incurring penalties from the state? but, What will the Lord have me to do? A man may be a drunkard in his

own dwelling, a gambler in the town, a bad husband or father or son, and yet escape civil penalties; but a Christian counts the divine disapproval reason enough for turning his back upon anything, however grateful to the natural appetites or sanctioned by society.

In view, therefore, of the family as influencing the character of society, and of the divine word as the rule of practice, we can hardly ask too often or too earnestly what is the will of our Creator in this matter. If there be in us the spirit of his children—the true, indescribable sympathy with "the whole family in heaven and earth" named after Jesus—we shall be at no loss to catch the meaning of his words and deeds, just as a true son or daughter, as by an instinct, apprehends the desires of a trusted parent.

"Whate'er my God ordains is right;
My light, my life is he,
Who cannot will me aught but good;
I trust him utterly.
For well I know,
In joy or woe,
We once shall see, as sunlight clear,
How faithful was our Guardian here."*

* Rodigast, translated by Catharine Winkworth.

Society had not yet begun to be when the Creator instituted the family, laying its foundations in the first generation. Master as Adam was, under God, of the new and perfect world, his nature, as his Creator framed it, and the perpetuation of the race, required more. The earth might have been peopled with human, as heaven with angelic, beings, "who neither marry nor are given in marriage;" but it pleased God to create one man and then one woman, the mode of it being doubtless intended to be remembered and understood by men as the exhibition of the closeness and sacredness of the marriage bond. The words of the first Adam in his innocence, "This *is* now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh" (Gen. 2 : 23), are interpreted and expanded by the Second Adam in reply to the Pharisees: "Have ye not read, that he which made *them* at the beginning made them male and female, and said, For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife: and they twain shall be one flesh? Wherefore they are no more twain, but one flesh. What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put

asunder" (Matt. 19 : 4–6). To count this a mere civil contract is to confuse the elements of things. There was then no society in existence. No state had been constituted; no law had been made by men. It was a distinct, divine arrangement. According to its very nature, there were relations and duties to each other, but there was also obligation to God, who determined the character of the union and assigned the duties springing out of it. When civil society came into existence, its duty was to recognize a principle already established from above, and to adapt itself thereto. So "marriage vows" now are from both parties to God no less than from each to the other. Hence, where the inspired history of the race is believed, marriage is in the divine name; and hence the ceremony is attended with religious exercises, and with the service of a minister of religion.

It seems of some importance to have clear ideas on this subject at the present time. In one section of Christendom marriage is made a sacrament like the Lord's Supper.* This has

* In the Vulgate translation of Eph. 5 : 32 the words are *sacramentum hoc magnum est*, the word *sacramentum* being

been rejected by all Protestants. But the alternative is not the theory of a mere civil contract. The civil law will regulate certain matters between parent and child, for example; but the civil law does not make the relation. So it regulates certain matters between husband and wife, but the relation itself is founded in "nature" to those who do not enjoy revelation, and in the divine appointment to us who do. "That *was* not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural." For its own purposes society takes notice and keeps the records of marriages, and the Christian, who is to be a good citizen, is to aid in this precaution; but he marries "in the Lord."*

commonly employed in the Latin for the Greek word rendered "mystery," which in the New Testament means a thing not discoverable by reason, but known by revelation. So the gospel (Eph. 3 : 3–9), the ultimate conversion of the Jews (Rom. 11 : 25), the incarnation (1 Tim. 3 : 16), and the meaning of the golden candlesticks (Rev. 1 : 20), are all called "mysteries;" but they are not sacraments. And indeed when the apostle says, in connection with marriage, "This is a great mystery," he is not speaking of marriage as such, but of the spiritual use he is there making of it; for he adds, "I speak concerning Christ and the church."

* It follows, of course, that polygamy, concubinage and all such human arrangements are opposed to the divine will.

We may form some idea of God's estimate of marriage as an element in forming character from an examination of the way in which he has dealt with his servants.

Abraham was married when called, but there is evidence that both he and his wife required training and discipline before the promised seed was given to them. It is not hard to imagine the depression, the heart-burnings, the domestic trials, involved in the history of

He made one man and one woman, and constituted the two one pair, one flesh. The often misused passage in Mal. 2 : 15 is to this point: "And did not he make one? Yet had he the residue of the Spirit. And wherefore one? That he might seek a godly seed. Therefore take heed to your spirit, and let none deal treacherously against the wife of his youth." The "spirit" here is not the Holy Ghost, which we are enjoined to ask, but the creative energy of him who, had he meant man to be polygamous, could have made for Adam two or twenty wives. But he made one man and one woman, and made them one pair or flesh. And wherefore? "That he might seek a godly seed"—perpetuate, that is, a godly race. This is the best-sustained view of the text. It is true polygamy was tolerated in some parts of the Jewish history; but any one who examines the lives of Abraham, Jacob and David, who may be quoted in favor of it, will see —what is not commonly noticed—that divine providences discouraged the relationship in the life and home of each of these men of God. Hagar, Rachel, and David's wives were in various ways parted from their lords.

Hagar. Lot was Abraham's companion. How far his wife was the means of drawing him and his family into the city, the society and the ways of Sodom we cannot say, but such a judgment as fell on her is not usually inflicted but as a mark and punishment of signal and continuous sin. It was not the natural impulse to look back, but probably the habit of linking all enjoyment with the place, that God visited and marked as displeasing to him.*

Abraham felt the importance of a godly seed when Isaac was to be married. What forethought, anxiety and precaution against his union with a daughter of the land we have reported to us, ending in the mission of the prayerful Eleazar and the bringing of Rebekah! There is a glimpse of Oriental adventure in the twenty-fourth chapter of Genesis; but there

* There is nothing in the Scripture narrative, of course, to justify the notion—taken up in a later time—that she was changed into, or made to stand up encrusted with, salt. This is one of the conceptions we get from the Apocrypha, probably. All that is said is that she lost her life, and when at some later time the body was found, it was "a pillar of salt." The traditions and supposed "pillars" only show how widely the event was known and how deep an impression it made.

is also a deep and practical truth which the young would do well to study. Prayer to God for guidance is the expression of our own sense of need of direction: the absence of it and the making of the choice without regard to the Almighty is practically to say, "I am able to arrange this matter of myself." If the results are unsatisfactory, the responsibility is not on the Lord; and even with a believer he cannot be expected to interpose and avert the natural results of such a disregard of his claims.

In the family of Isaac the wayward and self-asserting Esau disregarded the family tradition and married the daughters of Heth, to his mother's great grief, and to the stimulating of her zeal in behalf of Jacob, and a marriage by him among their own kindred. It is foreign to our purpose to linger on details; but it would not be difficult to show that in these suggestive memoirs every departure from the path of obedience to God is followed by some expression of divine displeasure, even when the wrong-doer is an acknowledged servant of God. Though he forgives the sin, he marks his displeasure with "their inventions" (Ps.

99 : 8). The notices of the lives of Jacob, David, Judah, and even Moses, contain ample illustration of this statement. Domestic strifes, envyings and violence are among the recorded results.* Just as the fall of Sodom foreshadowed the overthrow of the Canaanites, who should have taken it as a warning, so these sorrows in the patriarchal families, following upon sins, should have been warnings against judgments which the like lawlessness afterwards brought upon kings and people.

It is not to be wondered at, therefore, if the God of Israel warned the people against making marriages with the daughters of the land. (See Deut. 7 : 3.) The prohibition uttered through Moses is solemnly renewed by Joshua in his dying counsels (Josh. 23 : 12, 13). Not a few of the peculiarities enforced upon the Hebrews, as to religious rites, social usages, perhaps even dress, and in all likelihood also the slow and difficult way in which Gentiles could be taken into the Hebrew fellowship, were meant to keep up this separation. His-

* See in proof of this Gen. 30 : 2 ; 34 : 25 ; 38 : 7 ; Ex. 4 : 24–26.

tory to-day shows the efficacy of these precautionary measures. The formal and weighty reason given for the interdict is (Deut. 7 : 4) the danger of apostasy, through such unions, from the service of the Almighty. Subsequent Hebrew history justifies the restriction. The wisdom of Solomon has its glory stained by his apostasy in consequence of the forbidden marriages. Is there a sadder history anywhere, even of a king, than that of Solomon's closing years? When so lofty a man could be quoted as a precedent, it was not strange if later kings followed the example. With an expression of wonder at the audacity of his course, the sacred historian tells us how Ahab took to wife Jezebel (1 Kings 16 : 31), the princess of the Zidonians, so inaugurating a series of tragedies, and linking with Israel a name which stands for a mission of evil and the attendant wrath of God to the end of time. The dark device which Balaam taught the Moabites to use against Israel (see Rev. 2 : 14 compared with Num. 24) was thus brought into operation under royal sanction, and the attractions of heathen women were used to give to sin swift currency,

and to bring down threatened judgments. When Ezra sets about the work of reform, these unlawful intermarriages (Ezra 9, 10) form one of the greatest hindrances in his way, for not the common people, but the princes and chiefs, and even members of the priesthood, had been leaders in the lamentable course.

With these principles urged in the earlier Scriptures, with the consequences of disregarding them illustrated in the gloomy memoirs of Israelitish kings and people and enforced in the prophets, it is no wonder that the New Testament should assume that God's servants of the later Israel would marry only in the Lord (1 Cor. 7 : 39; 2 Cor. 6 : 14–18). Here the directions relate to Gentile believers who come to Christ after they have been married, and whose wives hesitate about continuing the relationship. The lines were so drawn in the apostolic time between the persecuted Christians and their fellow citizens, and the distress apprehended by them was so great (Paul making it a sufficient reason for foregoing marriage at that time, 1 Cor. 7), that the temptations to such unions would not be so many or so strong

as in a later time. The "unbeliever" would of course be a pronounced and decided foe of the new faith, and of course fellowship, common sympathy, co-operation in worship and service, and the general godly regulation of life would be out of the question.

So much it is proper for us to recall concerning marriage in the Old Testament. Like some other institutions, it has within it, as seen in history, a certain element of evolution. We understand it better in the present from having before the mind, in some degree, what it has been in the past.

What kind of yoke is that of two believers, partakers of one hope, one desire, one discipline, one and the same service? Both are brethren, both fellow servants, no difference of spirit or of flesh; nay, they are truly two in one flesh. Where the flesh is one the spirit is one too. Together they pray, together prostrate themselves, together perform their fasts; mutually teaching, mutually exhorting, mutually sustaining.—TERTULLIAN to his wife, vol. i., p. 303.

CHAPTER II.

NEW TESTAMENT LIGHT IN THE HOME.

Jewish errors corrected—Genesis endorsed—Tempters rebuked—The law in Paradise—Romish views—The wedding in Cana—Significance of the Saviour's course—Still to be invited—Parental feeling known to him—Child-obedience also—Misread words—His high example—Bethany—Christ and the children—His "Father's house"—New Testament homes—Ephesians instructed—Oberlin—Children's lesson—King Lear—Parents' monuments—A picture—God-like love—The "help"—Deputy-mothers—Undermining communism—Philemon.

It would be strange indeed if that New Testament which revolutionized the world, and which is a perfect guide to all times and all lands in all things that affect faith and life, did not touch, at many points, the life of the family. Our Lord, who cleared the Mosaic law of the misreadings and misconceptions of the Hebrews in the "sermon on the mount," set his hearers right also regarding marriage. Matthew (19: 3–9) tells us how the Pharisees tempted him with a casuistical question as to divorce. Possibly they hoped to draw out views like the

Baptist's, and in Herod's dominion* draw on him the same hostility. He replies by referring them to the record of creation. He thus puts his seal of approbation on the earliest chapters of Genesis; and no Pharisee or Sadducee ever met his points by the denial of this historic character. "He who made them at the beginning, made them male and female." He did not make merely two persons. He made two persons adapted to each other, each needing the other. Man, then innocent, and of one mind with God, and not yet deprived by sin of that part of the divine image which consists in knowledge (Col. 3 : 10), draws a conclusion ac-

*Great interest attaches to this reference in our own time, arising from the attacks on the historical character of Genesis. Our Lord quotes Genesis as a historic book, and he quotes from the first and second chapters as a continuous narrative, as Alford has pointed out. He does this in reference to a scholastic point of great interest at the time, and dividing the schools of Hillel and Shammai, much as the schoolmen of Christendom were divided regarding the divorce case of Henry the Eighth, at the Reformation. Our Lord would not have rested his case on anything merely traditional or ideal, or other than historical. He knew well all the bearings of the discussion on the case of Herod and his reckless wife, to whose hostility, it may be, the Pharisees hoped to expose Jesus.

cording to God's mind, so that it is here put as his (Gen. 2 : 24) ; or v. 24 may be the direct divine teaching. "For this cause shall a man leave father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and they twain shall be one flesh." Then come words which all Christian churches have adopted, and the force of which, let us hope, society, for its own sake, will never ignore in legislation or in sentiment: "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The tempters take refuge, with an ingenuity that anticipates the Jesuits, in a perversion of Moses. "Why did Moses then command to give a writing of divorcement, and to put her away?" Our Lord's reply touches their perversion. He did not "command;" he "suffered." He did not make the principle general; he suffered you, for special reasons,—"the hardness of your hearts." The sin was being committed : he regulated, limited it, required form and order, and the utmost protection to the woman so unhappily placed, and thus reduced the evil. "From the beginning," in Paradise, "it was not so;" and our Lord proceeds to indicate the only exception

pertinent to the case in hand, and presents it in such a way as not to confine the question to the case of the woman only.* Human legislation must always work mischief when it ignores the principle of this statement in any direction. Rome has made marriage a sacrament, and bases its indissolubility, not on Christ's ground, but on the church rite. But Romish populations, where most imbued with this idea—in Europe and in South America—are most loose in the matter of personal purity. Divorces in form are not chargeable on the community indeed, but the community is not the purer on that account. Elsewhere facilities for divorce have been unduly multiplied, and the sanctity of the marriage tie is sacrificed. Marriages are hastily and thoughtlessly contracted, because a show of "incompatibility" will suffice to break them. Thoughtful men are awaking to the mischiefs which this policy is producing.

It was by no mere accident that our Lord and his disciples appeared at the marriage in Cana. His kingdom is peace and joy. It

*For further reference to this matter, see the chapter on the *Ethics of the Home.*

banishes sin, and so banishes misery. It is light and holy gladness. John's preparatory work had an inevitable look of austerity. It was overthrowing in part. Christ's is building up. It is gladdening. It transforms, elevates, purifies. It provides for present and for future wants. All this is illustrated by "the beginning of miracles." The water of earth he can turn into the wine of heavenly gladness, and by a word. And this typical and suggestive display of power, and of the character of his dispensation, is at a family feast. It puts honor on the relationship of husband and wife, as the system fully developed banishes polygamy, lifts up woman, founds the family, and lays the basis for a pure society. It is the identification too of the miracle-worker with the Ruler of all. He who transforms the rains of the sky and the moisture of earth into the grape and the gladdening wine, here condenses the long and complex process into a moment before men's eyes. He is Lord of all; and he will not have his lordship forgotten now that he is entering on his distinctive work. Even the natural tie which bound him to his mother

is to be disregarded now that he enters on the work his Father in heaven has given him to do. Happy they who, counting him Lord and Master, invite him to their marriage feasts, and wise are they who keep away from them all that he would not approve. His presence is no check on gladness; it lifts it up, and makes it holy joy.

Nor is he indifferent to the nature of parental feeling, as God implants it. "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children," he says, and in the spirit of his words he responds to the appeals of parents for their offspring. He who drew the inimitable lines of the picture of the prodigal son knew the heart of a parent and of a child. The three persons whom he raised from the dead were an only son, an only daughter, and an only brother (Luke 7 : 11, 12–15, 8 : 41–56; John 11 : 1–45). He knew the aggravation of bereavements in such cases.

In his own early life he illustrated the dutiful subordination proper in the child to the parent. Notwithstanding the urgency of his Father's business, which he cannot but antici-

pate even in boyhood, he went back from the temple and the admiring doctors with Joseph and Mary, and came to Nazareth and was subject unto them (Luke 2 : 51). There was no irreverence in his question, "Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?" any more than in the words of John 2 : 4, when rightly understood.* So Luke is careful to tell

*Young readers have been puzzled over this language as abrupt, disrespectful in form and in spirit. This impression is taken, first, from the style of address, and secondly, from the question, "What have I to do with thee?"

But the first is not in any degree contemptuous, in the language of many nations. See, for example, the same word used in John 20 : 15, "Woman, why weepest thou?" Still more conclusive is the case of John 19 : 26, where the dying Son says from the cross, "Woman, behold thy son!" Dion Cassius, who wrote the history of Rome in Greek, makes Augustus say to Cleopatra, when he meant nothing but what was deferential, "O woman, take courage, and keep a good heart." It is interesting to notice that in Scotland the most earnest style of address to an individual is in this form. A popular writer of the day makes an educated man say to his friend, "Why, man, how could there be any such thing?" (Black's *Yolande.*) It is common enough to emphasize it colloquially by saying, "Man alive!"

As to the question, "What have I to do with thee"—literally, "what is that to thee and me?" it is not disrespectful like the English "mind your own business." It is often used in connections implying courtesy, as Judges 11 : 12; 2

us of the subjection. "The blossom of his inner life, which had opened and spread abroad its first fragrance in the temple, was to continue expanding it in the obscurity of Nazareth; and Mary was to wait eighteen years, keeping all those sayings in her heart, before anything else unprecedented should occur."* But the ineffably grave character of his work did not bury out of his sight the relationship ordained of his Father. Hanging on the cross, bearing a load the like of which never lay on any other, his eye found out the guardian of his early human life, and his wise foresight provided for her: "Woman, behold thy son!" To the disciple: "Behold thy mother!" And John, who had a good social position, "from that hour . . . took her unto his own *home*." O sons of self-sacrificing mothers! now, perhaps, lonely, feeble,

Sam. 16 : 10, and especially Matt. 27 : 19, where Pilate's wife meant only respect for Jesus. Our Lord meant to convey the idea that now he was entering on his Father's work, and that his obedience to him took precedence of regard to her. It is the same idea involved in his language, Luke 2 : 48, 49. "Thy father and I," said Mary, referring to Joseph. "My Father's," said Jesus, referring to his Father in heaven.

* Van Oosterzee, *in loc.*

and hungry for sympathy and affection, I do not say to you be manly, be grateful, be loyal, be tender, be chivalrous. All this one might well say. I say to you, be Christ-like, and before you provide for yourself, and before you set up your own home, see that there be shelter, love and care for her whom you learned, when you had learned little else, to call mother.

Before passing to other portions of the New Testament teaching regarding the home, we cannot but note the side-lights on its features, which are constantly flashing out from the inspired pages. Brothers and sisters may well linger over the brief memories of Bethany. What mother who has read her Bible has not a mental picture of the Saviour with the little child in his arms or set in the midst? Who that has watched over a sick child and religiously kept the room quiet forgets the scene where he put all out but the parents and the three favored disciples, and then said, Maiden, arise! He had noted the children playing in the market-place, and their ways—so truly human is this great divine Saviour. And when he would cheer his disciples with

the most hope-inspiring truth, it is of his Father's house in which there are many abiding places, even as the inspiration of his life is to do his Father's will, and the comfort of his spirit: "Thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

We have not time to visit the abode of Zacharias and Elisabeth, or of Cornelius and his household, nor to follow Lydia and her household, active in business, but regular at worship, and hospitable in the home, nor to study Aquila and Priscilla welcoming and teaching Apollos, nor to linger by the door of Mary, the sister of Barnabas and mother of John Mark, where the Jerusalem Christians held their night prayer-meeting, and where the maid who opened the door was so glad to see Peter that she could not stay to let him in, but must run to tell the rest; nor can we delay by that house in Cesarea where Philip, the evangelist, lived with four daughters, all teachers of Christian truth—types of the godly women now laboring in Sunday-schools, missionary societies, and on mission fields. We must hasten on to contemplate that high ideal of holy marriage

set up before the Ephesians, where had reigned Oriental lust, where wives are taught to submit themselves unto their husbands as unto the Lord, their headship being, like his, not one of arbitrary authority or of despotic power, but of unselfish love in a stronger nature; and in which husbands are bidden to love their wives with a love in kind like that with which Christ loved the church, a love unselfish, patient, generous, self-denying, and even unto death; for he gave himself for his church. Such abiding affection in a pure, strong man will make it easy for the wife to "reverence the husband." Nor do we need to ask the meaning of the same apostle's warning to husbands regarding their wives: "Be not bitter against them"—a most suggestive censure of that cold or supercilious or sharp way in which men often deal with their wives, in contrast with their gentleness to them in former times, or to others. Well do I remember a simple peasant woman, widowed in her early married life, telling me with indescribable feeling of the happiness she had lost. "Why," said she, "when we had to go to fairs and markets together, people used

to think we were brother and sister." He was not "bitter against her." When Oberlin was eighty years old and feeble, he was met as he leaned on the arm of his son-in-law, while his wife, less infirm, was walking behind alone. The old man—gentle and noble—felt bound to pause and explain how it was that she was not leaning upon him. In how many dwellings would a new atmosphere be breathed if this canon of genuine refinement were observed! What poor, mean criticisms, petty fault-findings, contemptuous glances and tones, would it exclude!

Nor is it needful to explain the directions to children to "obey *your* parents in all things" (Col. 3 : 20), as the way of being "well-pleasing unto the Lord." He sees the whole reach of influences and the whole growth of character —that if the child learn, in the sweet and safe school of a happy home, to obey constituted authority in a dear father and a tender mother, the habit of mind will run on, making an obedient pupil in school, a careful employé in business, a reverent member in the church, and a good citizen in the state.

"Children, obey your parents in the Lord," says the same inspiring Spirit (Eph. 6 : 1). He put them over you. They represent him. He speaks to you now as he cares and provides for you, through them. "This is right;" it is, in the nature of things, right. It is right now and ever has been. God wrote it at first on the human soul, and when sin blotted it out he wrote it, with the promise annexed, on tables of stone. And obedience to it has ever been a blessing. "Two forms of sin," said an aged clergyman, "I have commonly seen visited with sharp punishment here on earth; the one, men's sins against woman, the other, neglect of parents by their children." I recall a scene of sharpest sorrow—an aged man, bent down with disease and broken-hearted because a son was habitually trampling upon his feelings and interests. "Ah! I see it well," he said. "I can say nothing. I was a bad boy to my father. I am punished in the way of my sin."

Children, honor father and mother in that sense in which the teaching and ruling elder is to have "double honor." In France, where the partition of lands is carried very far, and the

care of aged parents is assigned to the children among whom the parental farm is divided, the utmost care is needed to keep the aged ones from being thrown a burden on the state. It is the misery of King Lear reproduced in humble life:

> "Sharper than a serpent's tooth it is
> To have a thankless child."

Cherish the feelings, maintain the forms, keep the language, and, no matter what it costs you, do the deeds of affectionate reverence.

Nor is the allwise Spirit unmindful of duty on the other side. "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath," by unreasonable despotism, by unwise tyranny, by disheartening exaction. They are to be noticed when they act well, appreciated in their honest efforts to do their duty, and cheered to fresh effort if they seem to fail. "I never hear a word but an order or a complaint." So said one whose mother was querulous, fretful and discontented, and with the least possible reason. On the other hand, when the high ideal of right to be loved and done at all costs is kept before the mind in all fitting ways, and where the consistent life and

the affectionate geniality commend and illustrate this ideal, a power is being set to work in the child's mind which works silently and yet effectively. "I find myself often," said a refined and accomplished woman mainly occupied now with her own grandchildren, "when I have to consider a matter, reflecting what mother would have me do, and if I settle into the feeling that she would approve my course, I feel more sure of its being right." What a monument a parent may thus erect!

As a preventive of the "bitterness," a parent does wisely, at some season when "off duty," to converse freely and as an equal with the child, to explain things, and to make it understood that it is not self-assertion, nor love of having one's own way, nor wounded self-love or passion, that prompts the use of "the rod," in whatever form it may be employed, but a sense of obligation to God and of responsibility for the child. One of our philosophers—not always to be implicitly followed—has given society a little book on education, containing, among other cautions, a useful warning on this subject. A child is warned against

a rash movement on the stairs. One day he makes it, tumbles, and is hurt. He is seized in a rough and punitive way, shaken perhaps a little, to the aggravation of his pain from the fall, and comforted thus: "Didn't I tell you not to go that way? I'll teach you to obey me." The better plan would be, truly says our philosopher, to appeal to the child's reason, and to do it with sympathy and kindness. "I am sorry you are hurt; but I warned you because I feared your being hurt." That this latter method is the better of the two there can be no reasonable doubt; whether a religious element could not be wisely imported into the matter is an open question. Certain it is that moral maxims in such circumstances, emphasized by a rough shake of an aching limb, are presented, as human nature is, at a great disadvantage. They are not "the truth in love."*

Here is a picture which will endure after

* The poor Lascar on the P. & O. steamer, whom the officer lectured after severe discipline, uttered in his own way a natural and common feeling when he said, "Floggee, floggee, preachee, preachee; but no floggee and preachee both!"

Rembrandt's and Turner's have perished, for it is painted on indestructible canvas. It is a Sunday afternoon in autumn, in a far-away land. Father and family had been to God's house in the forenoon, and had the family meal together. The cornfields lay around the house, the grain becoming golden, and the mild sunshine brightening all the scene. A tall, strong man is pacing slowly and with a happy, tranquil mien along the "head of the field," where a space is left uncultivated. His boy, held by the hand, is by his side. As the father talks to him the boy's mind is busy thus: "Why, father is often thinking about me; about what I am to be; father thinks I can grow up to something; father thinks I know many things, and that I can judge as he does; father has been long planning how I can be helped to be good and happy; father thinks I can fear God and be good, and that I will. I had no notion of all this; with God's help I'll try to be what father wishes me." That father has been with the blest for over thirty years. Almost all things have since then changed save the sweet sunshine; but that walk and talk, and the impres-

sion of that voice and hand, are as fresh as they were on that pleasant Sabbath afternoon. O parents! love your children as God loves us. He never winks at our sins. He never fails to recall his will. He never lets us sin without his protest against it. Love your children as he loves us, and there is no fear of your being too fond of them. Love them as he does you, and there will be authority on your side with no bitterness. And O children! believe in that father's and that mother's love—a faint echo and image to you of God's infinite tenderness—and there will be dutifulness on your side responding without pain to gentle, just authority on the other. Then home, called "heaven's fallen sister," will have to you ever more of approach to the perfection of which sin robbed it.

We cannot pass from this subject without noticing another class which the New Testament recognizes in the home, even to describe whose members, in our country, is a delicate and difficult task. The institution of slavery made the word "servant"—as applied to free labor—offensive. But "help" is a poor, indef-

inite word.* It was when slavery prevailed that the New Testament enjoined relative duties: "Servants, be obedient to them that are *your* masters according to the flesh" (Eph. 6 : 5–8). "Masters, give unto *your* servants that which is just and equal" (Col. 4 : 1). How much Christianity mitigated evils which it at length abates has been shown under the sway of slavery as an institution; and how much it has sweetened intercourse between the

*The writer has enjoyed for many years the aid of a Christian lady in the church, who conducts a female Bible class on the Sabbath afternoon—the time most free in the city—for the Deborahs and "little Hebrew maids" of whom, thank God, there are many in the church. How to announce it was a puzzle. "Help" is neither male nor female. "Female servants" contains the offensive element. It took form at length in some way as a class conducted by a lady "for those of her own sex who minister to our comfort in our dwellings." That some periphrasis is often needed was proved by a less felicitous experience. In view of many men around the place, such as coachmen, stable-helpers, and others, a merchant undertook a Sabbath evening Bible class for them. A neat circular explaining its purpose was freely distributed among them, inviting them to the "men's Bible class." Only two came. "Yes," said a very shrewd gentleman, "I saw the paper. I knew it would not do. It should have been gentlemen's class. There are no 'men' hereabouts."

employer and the man and woman paid for service in the home, one does not need to prove. I have known cases of Christian servants so faithful and beloved that it was stipulated and arranged that they should lie in the same grave-plot with the family in which a lifetime had been spent. Let Christian men take an interest in those to whom they pay wages, "knowing that they also have a Master in heaven," inquire as to their facilities for public worship, encourage them in this regard, do the like with their children, and themselves exercise some of that influence to bring which to bear they contribute to missionary objects, and they will as often see fruit as, person for person, does the minister from his preaching. Christian women! these housemaids and seamstresses are somebody's daughters, and they are away from their mothers. They are girls, young women, with the same nature your daughters possess. Be deputy mothers to them. Gain and keep their confidence. Make them feel that they have Christian friends in you. Pray with them in their troubles. Give them sympathy as well as orders. You will reap the results in their

gratitude and love, in their good, in the glory of Jesus Christ. "Your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him" (Eph. 6: 9). Let an opposite course be followed; let life down stairs be as it were a thousand miles away from life above stairs; let the only contact be in giving and receiving orders on affairs of the house in which the gentle rule—"forbearing threatening"—is sometimes, alas! forgotten, and is it to be wondered at if evil habits are contracted, if bad marriages follow the unrecognized area courtships, and if between class and class, money and labor, there grow up in time those feelings of which Communism, Nihilism and the like, with a good deal of justification, and still more that is reprehensible, should disturb the quiet-minded and alarm the nations?

In putting down these hints and suggestions, the writer has in mind in a good degree the condition of things growing up in our great cities. He has no little satisfaction in remembering that there are hundreds of thousands of families in which the women who "stand and wait" are in truth and reality a part of the

household, treated as members of the family, looked for around the family altar, and counted upon with their Christian sympathy and help in any time of family trouble. May God bless these gentle Marys and the Rhodas who know their nature and rejoice in their joy (Acts 12: 12–14), and increase their number from year to year. May he raise up more and more men of the type that Paul desired Philemon—in a letter which, inspired as it is, is at the same time a matchless compound of chivalrous gentlemanliness and Christian grace—to exemplify, and there is many an Onesimus who will—not by running away and falling into a minister's hands, but by remaining at home—become "above a servant, a brother beloved" (Phil. v. 16). And to such men interests may be intrusted with confidence; to such men the advocates of assassination as a reforming agency commonly appeal in vain.

A disciple of the New Testament, whose views are sublimed by its doctrines and its hopes, has gotten a superiority over the passions; a certain nobility of soul; a reach of perspective to distant consequences, whether on this or the other side of the grave; an ascendency of sentiment over sense; and withal a refinement and elevation of taste which, though caught at first from converse with spiritual and eternal things, still adheres to him, even when busied with the interests and concerns of the present life.—Thomas Chalmers, D.D., *Political Economy*, p. 424.

CHAPTER III.

THE ETHICS OF THE HOME.

"Dogma" loosely discarded—Religion involves ethics—Men a race—Not like angels—Visionary economists—"Well-born"—Abraham and Rebekah on heredity—Variety among human beings—Declaration of Independence misread—Men and women unlike, but equal—Property—The State interested—Purity—The Church interested—Religious ceremony—Converted polygamists—Our dangers from Mormonism—From divorce laws—Asceticism—"Fasting" ruled out—Justifiable celibacy—Barrack life—The family life and training—Schiller—Bacon.

It is a common, loose statement that religious teachers concern themselves too much with views, or, as it is popular to say, "dogmas," and too little with ethics. Had we the opportunity to question these critics, and ask for an exact definition of ethics, we should find endless variety of indefinite thinking. Take the very attractively simple definition: In physics we discuss what is, in ethics what ought to be. But is not religion, with its just thinking and its divine teaching as to right and wrong, aiming directly at well-being, *i. e.*, at what ought

to be? And do not facts show that human well-being is best promoted by true religious teaching? Where are the criminals reformed, the families elevated, the drunkards and the impure restored, by unbelief? Probably the objectors have an idea that there are certain principles operating in the nature of things, and apart from religious obligation (which they, mistakenly, count an arbitrary burden laid on men),* and which they represent to themselves as ethics. Without admitting for a moment the truth of this view, it may serve some good end to look at the constitution of the home apart from direct Scripture injunction.

It has to be borne in mind that we are part of a race. The angels are not affected by birth, training, family tradition, or any similar influence. There is no question of "heredity"

* We say "mistakenly," for God's commands contemplate the nature of man, which he, the Maker, knows better than man can do. They are the decrees of a sovereign God, but they are not arbitrary, in the sense of having no basis in the nature of things. Take any commandment of the Decalogue, even the fourth, and it is easy to show that it is *prudent* for man to keep it.

affecting them. There are fine ethical theories of society constructed for man, as though each individual stood alone, complete in himself and independent, ready to look around and make the best bargains he can with the other independent units of the world. But this is a visionary, an unreal view. Every human being is linked with other beings—father, mother, kindred—and is affected by what they are physically, intellectually and morally. He is formed in a degree by his surroundings, companionships, circumstances. There is, in spite of all suggested to the contrary, such a thing as being "well-born," "well-bred." Now, where in the inspired word is there any ignoring of that fact? The sacred writers are true to the facts of life, where the philosophers are not. It was a true instinct that led Abraham to exact an oath from his eldest servant not to take a wife for Isaac from the daughters of the Canaanites; that made Rebekah so weary of her life, because of the daughters of Heth married by Esau, and so anxious that Jacob should do otherwise. The family, and not the individual, is the starting-point of human society in the

nature of the case, as truly as in the history of Scripture.

Once more: the human race is not like a regiment of soldiers, all alike endowed, armed, uniformed and prepared for the same service. There are inherent inequalities, essential differences. One sex is physically weaker, as a rule, than the other. The mental constitution of one sex is different from that of the other, stronger in some regards, weaker in others. Any theory of education, government and life that ignores this fact must break down at length. That all men and women are "free and equal" by the nature of things does not mean that all men and women are essentially alike, nor that relations of authority and subordination may not exist. The *Declaration of Independence* never was meant to destroy the relations between employer and employed, master and pupil or apprentice, parent and child, husband and wife; though from the arguments made, one would sometimes suppose this to be its proper intent. We are "free and equal," not the serfs of human despotism or the slaves of human proprietors. He therefore

who would blot out the obligation of the child to obey the parent, of the servant to do the bidding of the master, even of the younger children to respect the views and example of the elder, of the wife to reverence her husband and to count herself the weaker vessel, would engage in a Quixotic war against fixtures in the nature of things. He might almost as reasonably insist that women should be uniformly as tall and weighty as men; that children should spring into being full-grown; and that each from the moment of birth should be self-supporting. Marriage, it follows, is a relation of inter-dependence between two persons. Each surrenders something needful to complete the being of the other, and each receives in return. Two married persons, husband and wife, are not like two soldiers in a company, each the counterpart of the other. They are the complement of each other; and as right feeling harmonizes officers and men, infantry and cavalry, making an effective army, so the inequalities of nature are regulated to the founding of the family on a basis of mutual help, trust and affection.

But there can be no family life without the question of property being raised. But property implies labor, and also the presence of others around us. The very word implies this. How can a thing be one's own but on the assumption that there are others around from whose possessions his are distinct? It follows, therefore, that society, *i. e.*, the state by its laws, must have something to do with the home. It is not by an arbitrary assumption of authority, but by a necessity of the case, that civil law takes cognizance of marriage. If one can conceive of a civilization not in the least affected by a divine revelation, even in such a civilization, in the nature of the case, the magistrate and the legislator must have something to do with marriage, for they must recognize property rights of wives and children. Society could not help itself; it must say in one form or other to the husband "Provide for thine own;" it must respect, and if need be enforce, the rights "his own" have upon him. It must in the last resort even say to the man, practically, "In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat bread;" and it must see that the

bread, in whatever form it is gotten—money, real estate, or whatever else—reaches the children—the heirs: but this implies its cognizance of all that which establishes legitimacy and makes heirs.*

For reasons different, but just as strong, the Church must, in the nature of things, take cognizance of marriage. It is no scheme of priestcraft—which is bad enough in itself, and has enough just charges proved against it—that makes this connection. All men would hold the Church bound to care for the morals of its members. But how can it do this without cognizance of relations? "Are these your children? Is this woman your wife?" How could a man be received into membership in any community approaching the nature of a church without questions like these being settled? How far a religious, a church rite is to solemnize marriage is a matter to be settled

* "Without the law of inheritance," says Dr. H. Martensen, of whose chapter on this subject some use is here made, "a sufficient motive to labor for the stability and future well-being of the family would be wanting, and work would be undertaken merely to provide for the moment—from hand to mouth." This is simply the condition of savages.

by Christian wisdom, taste, and regard for the divine honor; but a church, by its nature, and according to the very demands men would make of it, must take cognizance of marriage in the interest of morality, and in order to fidelity to husbands, wives and children.*

In like manner, from the nature of the case, polygamy must be set aside. Of course this has been done by Christianity. But where woman's true nature is unrecognized, as under the sway of a luxurious and corrupt heathenism, under Mohammedanism, and in some forms of existing savagism, there the union of one man and one woman is exchanged for that of one man and several women, or, in exceptional

* The truth of this statement is obvious to any one conversant with the work of missionaries among the heathen. One of the most difficult practical problems they have to face is the adjustment of the relations of a convert with more than one wife. Shall he be received and be at once a church member and a bigamist? Or if the second wife has to be put away, how shall they provide for her and her children? How justify the infliction of such a blow on her who entered into the union without any reproach from conscience or from society? In the judgment of many, and those well-informed Christian people, recognition of such unions, with proper safeguards against misinterpretation, will in some cases be the duty of Christian churches.

cases, of one woman and several men. The true ideas of union of intellect and heart, of paramount affection, of fidelity, of each finding in the other what is wanting in self, imply monogamy, as a right hand or a right eye implies one left hand or eye, and not several. This point is of interest in American life at this moment. We are far enough from the romantic devotion of man to woman, who was all but deified in the exaggerated devotion of the middle ages. We have the Mormon problem to face on the one side, with its claim of many wives for one man at the same time, and the divorce problem on the other, with its practical permission for many successive unions of one party during the life of the other. We need to study the invariably close connection between the right idea of the family and the welfare of society, the moral health and strength of a nation. The question is not at all a church question merely, as it is sometimes attempted to be made out, precisely as Sabbath-violators would fain make the matter in dispute with them to be. With almost as much reason might the imprisoned thief deplore the ignor-

ant prejudice lingering among Christians, in blind obedience to which they stand by the old rule, "Thou shalt not steal."

And here it may be proper to touch another question closely affecting marriage, namely, that of celibacy. In human history the consciousness of guilt has played an important part. How to take it away has been the problem. Self-inflicted pain, as in the fakir of India, or denial of things lawful, as in the fasting of Mohammedanism and Romanism,* have been among the answers given. It was no wonder that with the growth of ascetic feeling east and west—and it is as well established in Oriental religions as in corrupt Christianity—celibacy should be lifted to a high place. There is a form of it which, like marriage itself, is founded in nature. It is not necessary in a

* A confused idea lingers in many minds that the Hebrew law made much of compulsory abstinence from food. This is a mistake. An examination of the Pentateuch will show that only one day in the year was a compulsory fast. Superstition, indeed, added to the number in later times, as we may see by the prophetical rebukes. It is also noteworthy that the revision of the New Testament takes "fasting" away in three passages where it had no right to stand: Matt. 17 : 21; Mark 9 : 29; 1 Cor. 7 : 5.

book like this to enter into details of statement. A man may not be in a position to provide for others than himself. A woman may not be sought in marriage, and it were to become unwomanly for her to seek a union. There are cases of inherent personal reasons for abstinence from this form of life, physical and moral; and, finally, social conditions may be such—as in a time of war, of famine, of insecurity of life and property—that a man feels that his highest duty requires him to forego joys and pleasures. Soldiers, sailors, pioneers, explorers, like men in Paul's days, without yielding their abstract right, may remain single. They have high things to do, which render it necessary to deny themselves the joys of married life, as they do home, society and repose.

But this is a very different thing indeed from any theory which implies that celibacy is morally a purer, holier state than the estate of holy marriage—a view which has never been accepted on any large scale without injury to society. In fact it is almost a rule that in proportion as celibacy—not the result of such exceptional circumstances as we have men-

tioned, but an artificial, systematized violence to nature under the guise and with the prestige of higher spirituality—is thriving, in that degree the family, society and the state are suffering.*

Only one other point do we deem it important to notice in the ethical aspects of the home. It is for the good of mankind that families should be constituted and maintained. Barrack life is bad, whether it be for the economical and convenient accommodation of troops, or whether it be from the artificial raising of the standard of home comfort which now limits marriage, and even limits the married in the possession of separate homes. Hotel and boarding-house life is not the best for the education and training of children. In fact their existence is often a hindrance to admission to even this second-rate form of accommodation. All that arbitrarily interferes with

* From the language of Paul in 1 Cor. 7 : 1 it has been argued that he counted celibacy, in itself, a specially exalted state. This is to read the words in direct opposition to other divine words, as Heb. 13 : 4, which plainly is wrong, when his obscure language admits of another rendering, implying no contradiction.

"nature," as we commonly understand it, except from "duty and conviction," based on "individual peculiarities or special circumstances," is to be deplored and discouraged. It is bad for society that any number of its members should, to avoid responsibility or to maintain freedom from care, decline the duties of married life. Even in the exceptional cases where a high and commendable sense of obligation, or a necessity not courted, determines to a single life, there is commonly a defect of development in character. How could it be otherwise? The incompleteness of the individual remains. The discipline implied in home burdens has not been enjoyed. The daily habit of concession, considerateness of others, repression of self, and of looking at things from other angles of observation than one's own, is not formed.

For—and this applies to the whole subject of home and of life generally—the words "love," "confidence," "obedience," "fidelity," used in relation to an unseen being, are interpreted to the dawning intellect by the experiences that come to us through the relations of

parent and child, and the observation of the bonds binding husband and wife, brother and sister, together. Speak to us of the eternal Father, the elder Brother, the divine love, care and pity, and our obligation to honor, obey, trust, and be faithful unto death, and what meaning have the words but as we have learned it at home? If we know not what they represent as to those whom we have seen, how can we even guess at their significance towards him whom we have not seen? Schiller had in partial view a widely-working law when he wrote,

> "Love, only love, can guide the creature
> Up to the Father-fount of Nature:
> What were the soul did love forsake her?
> Love guides the mortal to the Maker."

"Certainly," says Bacon, "wife and children are a kind of discipline to humanity; and single men, though they be many times more charitable, because their means are less exhausted, yet on the other side they are more cruel and hard-hearted (good to make inquisitors), because their tenderness is not so oft called upon."

It is becoming a hard thing for our young men of fashion to afford the luxury of marriage; and our young women learn that the aim of life is a rich husband, who can supply the gold for the wardrobe and the glitter of an establishment. We have imported from abroad within these few years many of the loose ideas of modern epicurism.—E. A. Washburn, D.D., late rector of Calvary Church, New York.

CHAPTER IV.

WISE CHOICE.

No need to choose—Necessary burdens—Standard adopted—Reflex influence—Choice of husband or wife—Mutual adaptation—Mutual knowledge—"Mixed marriages"—About the wedding—The home—Not the hotel—About the bills—The "help"—The self-helpers—Teachers for the children—The elements required—*In loco parentis*—Public schools—Their teaching to be supplemented—Fitness for place in the family—The state—The church—"Who is sufficient?"—The "strength to the needy"—Light in the dwelling.

"THE strongest principle of growth," says a popular writer, "lies in human choice." Up to a certain period in life, the average member of a family is relieved from the responsibility of individual decision. A parent or a guardian has authority, and, in a right state of things, has the desire to decide wisely for the boy or girl. In the selection of books, teachers, places of sojourn and the like, the wisdom and experience of older persons can be counted upon. But there comes a time, which a wise person will not seek to hasten, when this help is with-

drawn like the temporary supports under an arch, and the young life must begin to bear its own burdens. Then character is developed. Then it begins to be seen what manner of man or woman one is to be, whether a blessing or a bane to society. It is a crisis in the history of a life when free choice is first to be made.

For, far more is commonly involved than the actual object. The rule of life that is taken is of the utmost moment. Are we to ask, "What is done by the rest of my class?" Or are we to say,

> "I will not choose what many men desire,
> Because I will not jump with common spirits,
> And rank me with the barbarous multitudes."

Or, avoiding these extremes, are we to ask, "What is wise for me according, as far as I can learn it, to the will of my Father in heaven?"

The reflex influence of a choice is too great to be overlooked. When it has been announced self-love prompts one to stand by it, to defend it, and to defend the principles on which it has been made. Lingering honesty inspires the desire to believe what prudence, self-love or consistency compels one to assert. Let a man

invest his means in a theatre, and it would be natural, that is, according to common tendencies, for him to dwell upon the gains to mankind, and to ignore the evils, of ordinary dramatic representation. Our views of things determine our choice, but our choice also, and often for long, determines our views. Thus it is that a believer in Jesus sees Christian evidences in a favorable light, while a deliberate unbeliever feels a certain satisfaction in any opposing views that seem to justify his attitude. So it is that "whosoever hath, to him shall be given; and whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he seemeth to have" (Luke 8 : 18). As with many other issues ascribed to arbitrary decree, this is the inevitable working out of inherent principles.

All these truths apply emphatically to the choice of husband or of wife, which commonly affects not only the happiness of life, but the formation of character. It is peculiarly infelicitous that young people rarely hear this topic talked of except in the way of pleasantry. Serious discussion of it might prevent mistakes,

and especially that levity in which the decision is often made. To decide because it seemed strange to remain single, to take up the nearest available person in proud resentment of rejection by another, to marry because the thing seemed romantic and picturesque, is so obviously foolish that one does not need to prove the case. A wise person will consider comparative identity of position, habits and ideas of life as to comforts, necessaries, and the like. The total absence of this adaptation is commonly reason enough for putting aside any thought of a choice. Comparative harmony of ideas as to the objects of life is no less necessary. For a plodding, honest, hardworking young man—to whom a thousand a year seems a good income, and who is now prudently saving two out of the seven hundred he is earning—to marry a woman in whose idea of life three nights a week at expensive entertainments is a necessity, would be to mar the happiness probably of both. To rush into a union without adequate acquaintance and mutual knowledge, not only of themselves but of their surroundings, is imprudent in a high

degree. "I did not marry your whole family," a man or woman may be compelled in certain circumstances to say; but the necessity is painful, and the situation should be understood beforehand. And finally, harmony of view on moral and religious matters is essential to happiness. We say moral—for the girl who thinks a flirtation by a married woman proper enough, or the man who ignores the obvious obligation "forsaking all others," brings into the union an element of destruction. When the dynamite will explode, and how extensive the damage will be, is only a question of time and circumstances. The man or woman who is "loose about money matters" can ruin a home on another line. "My wife—my husband—is constantly running into debt, and never thinks of paying"—such is sometimes the concise history of a domestic shipwreck.

And as to "mixed marriages," where, for example, it is made a condition on behalf of one party that the other should renounce the religious life hitherto pursued, by rebaptism or similar rite, or make special promises touching the children, or where, by tacit agreement, each

is to go his or her own way, no cautionary words could be made too strong. Few of such unions are truly happy. The birth of the first child is an element of discord. What is to be done with it? Where to be trained? The less enlightened and tolerant the church of either party the worse it fares with the other. "What about your children?" says a Christian friend, to the father of a family. "Well, my wife, you know, is a firm Catholic, and I let her manage things with them." "And you—what do you do?" And commonly he does nothing; because any decided action of his would be an element of discord. On the other hand the parent who concedes—say becomes a Protestant—has no capacity for giving the right training. "He was a Protestant, she a Roman Catholic, and the children are nothing"—such is too common a report. In these cases from the side on which is sacerdotalism, where the end is thought to justify the means, and where the inside life of a family is seen through the confessional, aggressive trouble will be raised, where people of Christian gentleness and self-respect will be inactive. To hold and to state these things—best known

to those who have lived where Romanism has had its way—is deemed by some unwise, un-American, illiberal; but there is need for their declaration. Rome, indeed, sometimes owns and deplores her losses through mixed marriages, but they are all too often the gains, not of Protestantism, but of carelessness. On the other hand she may be sometimes found boasting of accessions which she has arranged to secure in this way.*

When the preference of the heart is sustained by the verdict of the judgment upon outward fitness and personal harmony, there is confidence in putting the case before parents—as dutiful children who have learnt to honor their parents will do—and positive comfort in carrying along their sympathy and co-operation. Martensen quotes as an old proverb, "*Der*

* It is understood that a Roman Catholic priest is forbidden to marry one of his flock to a Protestant until a promise securing the children to the church is given. The writer has known of this demand being resisted by a bride as insulting to the man of her choice. Some go even farther in their requirements. A member of a Protestant church who renounces all the past at the bidding of a Romanist or a Romanizer, in order to be married, sacrifices self-respect at the outset, and starts in life on an insecure basis.

Eltern Segen bauet den Kindern Haüser"—the parents' blessing builds homes for their children. A parent's decided opposition is commonly good cause for delay, to say the least; and happy are they who can feel that both fathers and mothers approve the choice.

Nowhere, perhaps, in life is there more need for delicate perception of the fitness of things than after this choice has been made. To show the right feeling without silly parade, to arrange with self-respecting prudence for a marriage ceremony, in which ostentatious display of "connections," apparel and wedding gifts shall be "conspicuous by its absence," and to bear themselves as persons whom paramount affection and intelligent judgment have brought together, and who desire to set out in life with the blessing of a beloved and trusted Father in heaven,—this is the first burden of duty laid on young people, and as they bear it will be in some degree the estimate formed of them and the type of their inner life.

Next comes, in most cases, the choice of a home and all that is therein involved. It is good for the newly married as a rule to begin

by themselves, together, without the officious direction of others however well meaning, and it is good, if possible, to be in a home, not a boarding-house nor a hotel. It may be "love in a cottage," and the cottage may be humble; but it is commonly better adapted to the growth of a true, pure, simple life than "rooms" in one of those non-military barracks which the needs of our great cities are supposed to demand. A "mess-table" is doubtless proper for the officers of a regiment, or a group of monks. The passengers of a train or an ocean steamer of course can properly dine together; but for young married people, it is best that they should live together; their door closing out the world; that they should be all in all, under God, to each other; that the young wife should not be pursued by calculations as to how she looks to a hundred spectators; that he and she should plan together, wisely adapt their modes and habits of life to means and prospects, always remembering that it is comparatively easy to go up, but exceedingly difficult to descend gracefully. We do not overrate the poetry of the "lowly cottage;" we are dis-

tinctly sensible of the difficulty of reading the "register" or the "stove" into the versification of "the fireside," or of the heroic watchword *pro aris et focis*, for altars and hearths. We have read, of course, of

> "Home-made pop that will not foam,
> And home-made dishes that drive one from home,"

but we adhere to the conviction that a modest, self-contained dwelling is morally more healthy, more conducive to permanent happiness, more likely to have its "grace before meat," its family altar, and its practical prudence in management, than the "nicest apartments" in the most attractive hotel. How hard it has been, in many cases, to make the transition from the dishes of a French cook, at a salary of five thousand a year, to the more modest table of a wife's own arranging! Better to begin at the beginning, and to conquer the prosaic difficulties of life while the poetry of early love is still real, and while the later cares and anxieties of life are not yet pressing, than to be forced to the task when other and inevitable burdens have to be carried.

No mean assistance is secured by the young housekeeping couple who find a "domestic" who can be interested in the fortunes of the family, who can be made an honest friend as well as servant, and who will feel some responsibility for what many a faithful negro used to call "our family." It is a mistake to start with showy, pretentious persons, who feel called to train and direct their employers; and it is of the highest importance to find those who, fearing God, can be trusted to give something better than eye service.*

Of course we contemplate in these hints the dwellers in cities and the possessors of means, who, in point of fact, have, to say the least, as many dangers and temptations as attend the poorer. We do not forget the large class—the strength of the country, the hope of it, the source of supply to the cities—which has no questions to raise as to servants and the like, where wife and husband in love serve one

* In how many cases would employers gain and give benefit by taking an interest in the religious life of those whom they employ, calling to them the attention of ministers, and giving them facilities for availing themselves of Christian ministrations. (See on this Chapter II.)

another. May blessings rest on the thousands of dwellings where,

> "At night returning, every labor sped,
> He sits him down the monarch of a shed;
> Smiles by his cheerful fire, and round surveys
> His children's looks that brighten at the blaze;
> While his loved partner, boastful of her hoard,
> Displays her cleanly platter on the board."

In pleading for a home as against the imported substitutes for it, no allusion has been made to children, for this, among other reasons, that they are at a discount in such establishments; their possession is sometimes a disqualification for admission. So much the better is it commonly for the children, for when a family expands by this blessing being given, a new set of duties calls for attention, and a new set of burdens must be borne, and these are best carried in the old-fashioned home. Patience, endurance, self-denial, consideration, prudence, even frugality, become necessary virtues, to say nothing of the gentleness, combined with firmness, essential to the forming of the young lives long before teacher or lesson-book is in requisition.*

*The picture of the virtuous woman in Prov. 31: 10–31 may well be studied by young mothers. There is not room

When, however, the children have reached that stage a new decision has to be made, namely, regarding teachers for them. Parents will do wisely, wherever it is possible, to carry on the work of elementary instruction at home. The basis of mutual interest and confidence is thus laid; the child learns to defer to the parent; the parent gets some knowledge of the bent of the child's intellect; and the simplicity of child-life is preserved. Sooner or later, however, the average child has to be put under other instruction. If the parents have in the right spirit chosen a pastor for themselves, they sought a man capable of teaching spiritual truth, a man in earnest in the doing of it, and of such a character that his moral influence is elevating. In many respects the same elements are to be kept in view in the choice of teachers, and the institutions under the influence of

here to point out its features. The author takes leave to refer to a volume, *Papers for Home Reading*, of which it forms one, and in which "temper" and other elements of home-life are discussed and illustrated by narrative. Written twenty years ago, and in another land, they do not contain one sentence of which the author's wider observation of life would require the change.

which the young life is to come. The child has to be trained in all things to serve God. The spheres of service include the family, the state and the church. No one is permitted, no one is quite able, to ignore these fields of activity, and wise parents will bear this in mind while aiming at the choice of instructors for their children.

Much is being written and spoken in our day regarding the "higher education" of men and women. There is still room for discussion of the topic which Mr. Charles Kingsley broached —their lower education. Such matters as the laws of health, the uses of money, the truth of things as distinguished from conventional lies, the forms of self-help which may be needful to the most favorably situated and are needful to the majority,—these and other like departments of human training must, to a great degree, devolve on parents—perhaps especially on mothers.

So the subject of "co-education" has lately awakened attention—a subject on which Martensen, quoted and commended already, has written wisely. It is worth considering whether

the education of the boys and girls together in the home, in the elementary departments in which both are trained, would not be beneficial in fostering mutual, intelligent sympathy, in giving boys gentleness, and girls more practical views of things; for surely it is not uncommon to have boys grow up with the idea that "girls cannot know much," while girls often fail to do justice to boys in other respects. They are the more likely to estimate members of the other sex justly from such contact with well-trained brothers.

In the great majority of cases the children of our country must avail themselves of the common schools of the country, in which the formal teaching of the religious element must necessarily be limited. The Sunday-school, in a degree, supplements the day-school. Both must be supplemented by the personal teaching and influence of the parents. But in the cases where nursery-governesses, tutors and others are called in, or where the children are sent away from home, the teachers stand in the room of parents, and it well becomes them to select their substitutes in full view of the

interests involved. Habits may be contracted in these early years that bring ruin on the life. Associations may be formed that will in time corrupt and destroy. An ideal of what life is to be may be imparted so false and dangerous as to nullify all future efforts. Methods of deceit, of cunning, of selfishness, may be illustrated to the child, and in the end commended to it, that will long resist the wisest and the most effective teaching. The brain may be educated, while the heart is hardened. Self-indulgence, conceit and fancied superiority to parents may be instilled into the mind when the education of the judgment, will and affections ought to have been preparing the child for a place in the family, the community, and the church of God—places that can never be rightly filled without this early training.

"If there be all this burden of responsibility," some one may say, "who then would have children?" We reply that nothing is gained by closing our eyes to the actual facts of life, and he or she who says in lowly self-distrust, "Who is sufficient for these things?" is the most likely to look up and say, "Help me, O

my Father, who hast put the parental love in my heart, and hast given these children into my hands that I may be to them, in love, wisdom and guidance, in some poor remote way, what thou, my all-wise God, hast been to me, thy weak and wayward child."

A glance at a historic picture of the Old Testament will best enforce the points we have been trying to establish. Plague after plague had come on Pharaoh and his people. The king's heart was hardened—by himself in pride and obstinacy, by God in just judgment. He did not wish to have knowledge of God (Ex. 5 : 2), and God gave him over to a reprobate mind (Rom. 1 : 28). Pharaoh is at the head of a long succession of transgressors. Blow after blow fell on the people, and on their gods—in vain. At length came darkness; darkness on Egyptians alone; darkness that might be felt. Light had been spurned. The punishment is in the way of the sin. But there is light in Goshen. The sun, the creature of the God of Israel, and not a deity to be worshipped, sheds his beams over Jehovah's people. Egyptians only sit in dreary helplessness. Better then

to be in a Hebrew hut than in an Egyptian palace, to be a Hebrew slave than an Egyptian master.

One excellence of a book or a picture is its suggestiveness, and in this regard the Bible is matchless. But we must study the book or the picture if it is to suggest to us. Would that our readers could be induced to dwell on this, as the Psalmist does, and as John did, if we may judge from their most impressive allusions (Ps. 78 : 49; Rev. 16 : 10). Then would it be seen that God's people, in their loyalty to him, escape many calamities which befall the evil doers through their own evil-doing. Call that "misfortune" which leaves a dwelling squalid, filthy and miserable, where strong drink is allowed to rule and ruin! Call that "misfortune," and reflect, in view of it, on God's government, when lunacy is in the ascendant, where human heartlessness and cruel wrongs have struck blow after blow till reason reeled! Many a family is miserable because of violence of temper in some of its members. The rest live as over a volcano which at any time may send out its smoke and fire. or they breathe

with pain an atmosphere poisoned by peevishness and fretfulness. Godliness puts a bridle on the tongue and a curb on the temper. It throws, like the prophet at Jericho, healing salt into the bitter waters, and they lose their bitterness. Jealousy does not consume, nor violence waste, in the homes where God is honored.

They who fear God have light within them. Even when they suffer, as they often do, from the sins of those whose lives are as a part of their own, they have no pang of remorse. No accusing conscience torments them. Faith and hope can make music in the soul when there is gloom around. The motives to exertion and effort remain with them when others are paralyzed with terror or impotent in their despair. As the pines on the hill-sides with little seeming foothold, and beaten by many a blast, yet hold their ground and grow up in tall and stately dignity, giving grace to scenes that would otherwise be bleak and bare, so God-fearing men and women, who have learned to be content, to sing praises in prisons, hold their ground, "eat and are satisfied," and give glory

to Christ, and good cheer to the fainting around them, when but for them all would be dreary and discouraging. Would you, readers, have light in your dwellings? Be of God's Israel. Believe the love that God has toward you in Jesus Christ, in whom it is declared. Love him in return. This love will prompt to the keeping of his commandments, and they are not grievous. It is the breach of them that is grievous. Have regard to the divine will in every act of choice, in every decision for yourselves and for those linked to you. So, though you be not yet in Canaan but in Egypt, though evil be around you, and you are compelled to see it, perhaps in some degree to feel it, there will be peace in your consciences, light in your dwellings.

The voice that breathed o'er Eden
  That earliest wedding-day,
The primal marriage blessing,
  It hath not passed away.

Still in the pure espousal
  Of Christian man and maid,
The Holy Three are with us,
  The threefold grace is said.

For dower of blessed children,
  For love of faith's sweet sake,
For high mysterious union
  Which naught on earth can break.

KEBLE.

CHAPTER V.

MUTUAL HELP AND CARE.

Two better than one—Captain Kane and the Esquimaux chief—Human capacities provided for—"Solitary in families"—Spiritual communion—Book of remembrance—Reflex influences—The desert blossoming—Marriage ties consecrated—James Sherman's parents—Joseph and Asenath—Husbands won—Words of warning—Married coquettes—"Which family?"—Human wrecks—Children ruined—Pure men's duty—The inclined plane.

A STROPHE in the book of Ecclesiastes well represents the gain of companionship and the weakness of isolation. The writer fixes his eye on a solitary being—"one *alone*, and . . . not a second" with him; he is childless and brotherless. There is none to share the fruit of his toil. "Two *are* better than one." Their joint work is more than the double of what each can do alone. The weakness of one, moreover, is supplemented by the helpful strength of the other. So the Master sent out the disciples to their difficult task "two and two." Woe to him that sinks down alone; there is none to keep him up. Captain Kane tells in the jour-

nal of his *Arctic Voyage* how gladly he slept as close as possible to the Esquimaux chief Kalatunah, when the intense cold made even a savage a welcome companion. So in a milder degree the poorer Orientals, with no clothing but what they carried on them, must have often realized the same fact on their journeys through the wilderness in the chill of their nights. "If two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm *alone?*" One may be worsted by a single foe, against whom two would be adequate protection; and if there be three on a side, so much the better: "a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

There is no need to seek out a deep, mystical meaning in this proverbial saying founded on the art which draws out the hemp into separate strands mutually bracing, instead of twisting it in one ever-loosening mass. There is no reason to discover in this the evangelical combination of faith, hope and love, still less the mystery of the Trinity. It is a simple statement of strength in association. Better than in the German proverb quoted by Löckler, "Strong alone, but stronger with others," is

the idea expressed in the Talmud, "A man without companions is like the left hand without the right." This element of power through association, illustrated in the state, consecrated in the church—the communion of saints—has its best manifestation in the divine arrangement by which the solitary are set in families, or, as Dr. J. A. Alexander renders it, "God makes the lonely dwell in houses."*

Solitary confinement is the terrible aggravation of the prisoner's sentence—misery piled upon misery. Man was made for fellowship. He has the power to catch meaning from gesture, eye and tongue in others, and to utter in response his own thoughts and feelings. He has inner affections that crave expression:

> "How sweet, how pleasing sweet is solitude!
> But grant me still a friend in my retreat
> Whom I can whisper, Solitude is sweet."

Plato thought that he who delights in absolute solitude is either a beast or a god. The Creator alone has all resources in himself; the creature is dependent. The Infinite "is his own circle,

* Psalm 68 : 6.

and can subsist by himself;" men are miserable until understood, loved, and at liberty to speak and cultivate fellowship. The proofs of this are many and varied. Cowper did not overstate, probably, when he puts into the lips of the Scottish sailor, Alexander Selkirk, alone on the isle of Juan Fernandez, the words:

> "O solitude! where are the charms
> That sages have seen in thy face?
> Better dwell in the midst of alarms
> Than reign in this horrible place."

For man's aptitudes he who made him has fittingly provided in the home, in social life, and in the communion of saints. Any struggles after enjoyment on other lines than these must be fitful, hurtful, and in the end unsuccessful. In all the relations in which God puts us, we are not merely to be simple, truthful and pure in the interchange of thought and feeling, but we are required to breathe a heavenly spirit into our intercourse, to consecrate social feeling, and to make of natural emotions spiritual links, binding us to one another and to the eternal King and his heavenly kingdom. Co-heirs of that inheritance, con-

scious of their standing, and dwelling together, cannot be silent about it. "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." The "stout" words of the ungodly called out the pity of the God-fearing. "It *is* vain to serve God," said the scoffers.* The louder their words the more the godly said among themselves for God. So it will be till the day of divine vindication and complete severance between those who fear and those who disregard the Almighty. Meantime he whom some treated as an idle onlooker, speaking after human fashion, was bending the ear, and as the kings of the Orient had their chronicles, with the names and deeds of their faithful servants (Esther 6 : 1), as Moses was bidden to write "a memorial in a book" (Ex. 17 : 14), so he who uniformly speaks in human language and uses human imagery that he may be under-

* See the whole connection in Mal. 3 : 13–18, on which Pusey, in his *Minor Prophets*, has some admirable remarks, of which we have made some use.

stood by human beings, who "remembers," though all time is present to his view, speaks by Daniel of the judgment being set and the books opened (Dan. 7 : 10). So John, usually adopting figures from foregoing Scripture, and so marking the unity of the whole, and giving fitness to the closing book of Revelation, speaks of the "books opened," and of the book of life —a book already referred to by Moses (Ex. 32 : 32) and David (Ps. 69 : 28), and even by our Lord, when he says, "Rejoice because your names are written in heaven." Husband, wife, how much is there to your credit in that book of remembrance? How often, when light and scornful words have chilled the heart of lowly saints, have you revived the drooping faith, and restored courage and confidence? When unbelief, without self-respect and careless of consequences, has scattered its fires, have you quenched them with water from the fountains of eternal truth? How often, when fears chilled the heart bound to yours, have you uttered words of holy cheer? How often has the faith of one shamed the doubts of the other? For such is a privilege you may have,

and there will be place for it in God's book of remembrance.

But not for his sake only, nor in dutiful care for wife or husband, nor for the sake of cheering the dispirited, are we to speak true, brave, kind, sympathetic words, but for our own sake also, as a check on the tendency of the world to preoccupy and engage us. "Exhort one another daily." Ministers are to preach to their people, but the people are to preach to one another. Ministers conduct Sabbath services. This ministration is to be "daily." Reflex influences are to be thought of. The confessor is strengthened in the act of confessing. There is daily danger. As certainly as the ink dries in the air, as the clay hardens in the brick, as the soil in the time of drought becomes parched and unproductive, the corn in it dying, so certainly the deceitfulness of sin hardens and deadens the heart, and forbids any spiritual fruitfulness. Against all this, Christian fidelity is to be the barrier. The plains through which the traveller is carried westward toward the Rocky Mountains seem barren and useless. The sage-bush monopolizes

the wastes. But one comes to a place where industry has brought the water from the hillside, inclosed the garden, set out the fruit-trees, and planted the grain, and a literal, a most definite oasis rises up in the desert. Such spiritual irrigation we must use in the home for the good of one another. "Exhort one another daily, . . . lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin." Why should right feelings be lost? Why should old and true convictions be given up in new relations? Why should a high ideal of life, cherished in the days of hopeful and poetic youth, be exchanged for the creed of the foolish, "Let us eat and drink; for to-morrow we die"? Why should the fellow creature at our side, once perhaps reverent, tender and conscientious, become cold, hard and reckless, if any word of love, fidelity and pleading on our part can arrest the decay? "He who does not speak truth freely is a betrayer of the truth."

For, consider and closely apply these principles to life in the home. Two persons have become one in affection, interest and aims.

They are nearer to one another than either can be to any other human being. They have common joys, cares, hopes and burdens. There is natural fellowship between them.* But is this all? Should there not also be spiritual communion? Take the case—thank God that there are so many!—of husband and wife both knowing and confessing Christ. How truly they may speak often one to another! The deepest interests they have are religious. Happy as they are in one another and in their home, this felicity is but a foreshadowing

* It is very common in the homilies addressed to women as wives to urge the importance of their being cheerful, and of their maintaining an atmosphere of "sweetness and light" in the dwelling; nor can too much importance be attached to the attractions to be thus given to home. But it would be most unfair to put on the wife the exclusive responsibility in this regard. Her duties are monotonous, prosaic, and often irksome. She has little of the variety and of the stimulus which a healthy business or professional man enjoys in constant contact with his fellows. He should bring freshness, interest and animation into the home. His words should lift her for the time out of the petty rut of domestic management and diplomacy about "service" and kitchen-supplies. In one word, the husband and the wife are equally bound each to cheer and brighten the life of the other, and both that of their household.

to them of higher bliss in a home eternal. Their profoundest experiences—those which make life and character—are religious. How intimate and strengthening their converse may well be! Even before union, gracious influences are often carried from one heart to another on the wings of kindly and gentle words. Here is the simple account which the Rev. James Sherman, long a faithful pastor in London, gives of his parents' religious life:

"My father was brought to decision for God under the ministry of the Rev. John Newton, of St. Mary Woolnoth, though the seeds of piety were sown in his heart by my mother during the period of their courtship. By her he was entreated to hear the gospel fully preached on the Sabbath. 'The gospel?' he replied; 'why, are not the gospel and epistle read in the church every Sunday?' However, at last she prevailed upon him to hear Mr. Newton, whose preaching was so different from anything that he had previously heard, and the way of a sinner's salvation was so clearly pointed out, that he became alarmed for his

safety, and no longer required urging to attend."*

Where one of the two does not know or obey the truth, it is needless to show that the obligation on the other is clear and explicit. We cannot fancy Joseph silent to his Egyptian wife regarding the God of Israel, nor Moses holding his peace regarding the God of his fathers to the mother of his sons. In the membership of the churches there are commonly more women than men. Was it so in the days of the apostles? We do not read of godless wives won by the lives of their husbands to the faith of Christ, but the wives are encouraged to hope that where their husbands obey not the word, they may be won by the pure, gentle life of those who own subjection to them, and yet serve God in the "beauties of holiness." The desire to please, to attract, to win esteem and regard, is, within certain limits, right in man and woman; but oh, how holy is the ambition in a godly woman, not by airs of conscious sanctity, or the dicta-

* Memoir of the Rev. James Sherman, by Henry Allon, p. 17.

tion of religious superiority, but by reverent fidelity to all marriage vows and all gentle service of Christ, to win the sharer of her life to the obedience of Christ!

It would not be right to quit this subject of mutual care without some words of warning. Many who never meant to sink have yet gone down in married life. "Want of thought" works evil no less than settled purpose. Married life cannot in the nature of things retain the proportion of high poetic sentiment that obtained, and rightly obtained, in the period preceding it. The business of the world necessitates much prose. And the near, unreserved intercourse of the home, while it many times discloses unlooked-for virtues, often brings to light unexpected peculiarities, whims, idiosyncrasies, which perhaps held themselves out of sight before, or which perhaps the fond, admiring eye did not notice. Here it is that high tone and true nobleness are to show themselves. Every individual has his or her own way, and, within the limits of right, that way is not to be interfered with. Impatience, petulant criticism, petty fault-finding, invidious

comparisons with others, are as foolish in themselves as they are heartless to the party rebuked. The man who can tell his wife that she should carry herself like some one of their mutual acquaintance wounds her deeply, whether she shows it or not by the reply, "Why did not you propose for her? Maybe you did, and she would not have you." The woman who holds up to her husband some other man whose ways she prefers to his not merely humiliates him through his self-love, but sets him to inquire how many complicated aims may have led to her acceptance of him. So coldness, chilling alienation, embarrassing restraint, are introduced where all ought to be warm, gentle and genial as the sunshine of the spring.

Of the weakness which, from vanity, love of admiration, or prurient curiosity, leads husband or wife to seek and to take satisfaction in the society of persons of the other sex, to the disregard, even for a moment, of the chosen object of avowedly paramount affection, nothing need here be said. Christian homes are contemplated.

But that there is danger in society, and that it becomes fatal to many a union, no one can live in the world and not know. Women, while the "breadwinners"—the *house-bands*, as the old Anglo-Saxon made the word*—are busy with necessary toil, will welcome the corrupt compliments of the idle and showy, whose very attentions are proofs of inferior principle and base mental constitution. The thing is so far felt by them to be questionable that it is wholly or partially concealed from the husbands, and when it reaches them for the first time through others—who speak with more or less regard for their welfare—impaired respect, loss of confidence and peace of mind will be the inevitable results. Jealousy and rage are often enough the sad product. Discouragement in a man's business is the near consequence. "Why toil, deny myself and plan for a woman who finds her joys elsewhere?" Revenge in kind is sometimes taken. Alienation is certain to follow. Life is poisoned and

* "The name of the *husband*, what is it to say?
Of wife and of *household* the band and the stay."
TUSSER.

home is turned, in marked cases, into a portico of hell. Of the tragic issues in scandals and divorce-court pleas one needs to say nothing. They speak for themselves. In part the results of our growing stupid and contemptible copying of European ways, deemed to belong to "high life;" in part the outcome of hotel-life as distinguished from home-life; in part the product of loose, irreligious and unhealthy tastes, provided for and strengthened by the panderers to the pleasures of society, and in part the indirect attendants of great wealth and little religion—these social incidents are becoming our national disgrace. As citizens we should not only blush for the evil, but resist the beginning of it; as Christians we should use all preventive measures within our reach. All honest men should create and maintain right sentiment on the subject. All pure women should be ready to say, as a woman has said:

> "A worthless woman! mere cold clay,
> As all false things are; but so fair
> She takes the breath of men away
> Who gaze upon her unaware;
> I would not play her larcenous tricks
> To have her looks."

But it is not women alone who err here. Men rich and poor (and probably the proportion of transgressors to each class is about the same) sin before marriage, so as to imperil the peace of their union, if it even be justifiable. "He is troubled about his family," said one, in sympathy with a broken-down merchant. "Which family?" was the reply. He who made that cynical rejoinder knew how the broken-down man, his brother-in-law, had blighted the life of his sister, the mother of his legitimate children. In the showy walks of a hollow and conventional "fashionable life," covering up heart-woe under Parisian attire and studied manners, in the gloomy privacy of loveless chambers, in houses of shame, in early graves, and in the living tomb of the lunatic asylum, may be found the victims of man's infidelity. "A woman's lot is made for her," in a good degree, "by the love she accepts." When it is the love of a dissolute liar, the more she is of a true woman, the heavier the blow when the discovery is forced upon her, and every hollow compliment from him ever after awakens "thoughts like willful tormentors." When

children know the facts—as all too often they come to know them—what can be the result but loss of respect, sympathy, perhaps, with one parent and scorn of the other, or the undoing of every inculcated lesson of purity, and the ruinous tread in the father's footsteps?

These pages will not fall under the eye of such men as we have imperfectly described, for they do not "believe in pious books;" but they may reach some not yet on the tempting inclined plane, who will, through them, understand better the tendencies of things, and be led to turn their backs on everything, in word or look, in act or on the printed page, which corrupts man or woman, and carries the fever germs of lawless lust into the sanctity of home.

O happy house! where thou art not forgot,
Where joy is flowing full and free;
O happy house! where every wound is brought,
Physician, Comforter, to thee,
Until at last, earth's day's work ended,
All meet thee in that home above
From whence thou camest, where thou hast ascended,
Thy heaven of glory and of love.

KARL I. P. SPITTA.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LIGHTS AND SHADOWS OF HOME-LIFE.

Topic ever fresh—Home touched at every point by inspiration—Pure atmosphere—Wedding-day—A perpetual doxology—Setting out wisely—Bright skies clouded—"Clear shining after rain"—Esaus and Absaloms—The spirit of Samuel—Heroic self-denial—"Reverse of fortune"—The tentmaker—The carpenter's son—The want of six cents—A family tryst—Thorn-crowned kings—Thanksgiving at home—"Ebenezer" raised in the parsonage.

THE subject of home is ever fresh and always timely. Spring is not uninteresting to us because we have seen it many times. Nor are pictures of home dull or common because we have often looked on the like. "Home is home, however homely," and the best part of our memories and of our earthly hopes is commonly linked with it. We can find many an excuse for the frailties of those who never had a home. Our earliest conscious life was lived at home, and our first duties, next to those we owe to God, are to our homes. No wonder that Christ said, "Go home to thy friends, and tell

them how great things the Lord hath done for thee."

The Bible, as we have seen, is full and explicit on the subject of home. It lays the foundation of it in holy marriage. It fixes the relations between husband and wife, parent and child. Two at least of the commandments are safeguards of the home. The newly-married man, under the Mosaic arrangements, was exempt from war and any duty that would take him away, "*but* he shall be free at home one year, and shall cheer up his wife which he hath taken." She had quitted for him the house of her father; he is to make the transition as easy as possible. The high resolve of the Psalmist is "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart" (Ps. 101: 2). The description of a thoroughly-depraved transgressor against God is, in the stern speech of the Old Testament prophet, "Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, *he is* a proud man, neither keepeth at home" (Hab. 2: 5). On the contrary a prominent feature in the character to be impressed on the younger women, according to the practical teaching of the New

Testament, is that they be "keepers at home." It is no extravagant assertion that home-life is sweet and pure in the degree in which the divine counsels purify its atmosphere, and the divine will is regarded in its arrangements. High honor is put upon the elements of home when the Creator is "our Father," when we are comforted by him, "as one whom his mother comforteth," when Christ is our "Elder Brother," when we belong to "the whole family in heaven and earth . . . named" after him, and when our hope is, when absent from the body, to be "at home with the Lord." Selecting a few of the incidents and features of home-life, let us see how the light of revelation shines on them, and how in that light we, who receive the revelation as a perfect rule of faith and practice, ought to regard them.

That event, with its attendant manifestations of joy and sympathy and hopefulness, which our Lord graced with his presence at Cana cannot be without interest in any circle. A marriage influences strongly, for good or for ill, the condition of at least two persons. It has moral and spiritual, as well as social and

material, aspects. Not one word is to be said against displays of gladness and outward and sensible signs of goodwill to those immediately concerned, so long as they are within the lines of prudence, and are sincere and unostentatious. Nothing is to be said against the publicity, the joyous emphasis, given to all connected with it. Life has none too much of innocent enjoyment. But care is to be taken that the "children of the bride-chamber" do not put out of sight the greater elements of the matter, the dependence on the Almighty, the recognition of him in the heart, and the serious and earnest committing of the lives immediately affected to his guidance. As is pointed out elsewhere, the state has a definite and necessary relation to marriage. Although no Scripture command connects the church with it, in the nature of things, in the development of Christian life, solemn religious service ratifies the union of Christians. Even heathen sense of propriety led to a like course in the times before Christ. The principles embodied and expressed in this usage must not be forgotten.

The excitement, preoccupation and novelty

of experiences may be unwisely allowed to shut out the very recollection and convictions under which the steps of life ought to be taken, if it is to be deep, true, pure and sincere. A period of artificial and stimulating excitement is a bad preparation for the prudent arrangements and careful and well-considered plans of life. No union is so complete as not to require mutual concessions; and we are but poorly prepared for making them by the accompaniments which custom links with a marriage. These, while they are innocent and the true expressions of honest feeling, are not to be deplored; but wise and reverent believers will try to keep God and his will before the mind; will seek to hold the deeper things of life in view; will rate the demonstrations at their true worth, and try to feel habitually that the outcome is to be as each is to the other in the union, and as both are to the Father in heaven. To realize the eager good wishes of their friends for "long life and happiness," the bride and groom do best when they, with becoming earnestness, dedicate their joint life to the glory of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

"Gay mirth shall deepen into joy,
Earth's hopes shall grow divine,
When Jesus visits us, to turn
Life's water into wine."

There are certain gifts and graces commonly needed in the life of the newly married, and then called for for the first time. Parents and friends have, until now, made arrangements and determined the character of the home. New decisions have now to be made by themselves. A prudent, safe arrangement, marked by moderation and good sense, is of the utmost moment at the outset. But this demands the "discretion" or judgment with which good men guide their affairs (Ps. 112 : 5), which is all through the book of Proverbs the equivalent of taste, sense or thoughtfulness. (See Prov. 1 : 4 ; 2 : 11 ; 3 : 21 ; 5 : 2 ; 11 : 22.) Many a time the eye has been turned to the estimate of acquaintances, the supposed demands of society, and the ambitious and unreasonable reproduction of the comforts and appearances of the home that has been left (which is itself the late result of a life of industry and prudence), and the issue has been embarrassing and humiliating

because of the enforced retrenchment; all which had been avoided if the prayer had gone up for the wisdom that cometh from above, and the mind had been cleared and elevated in its aims by "communion with the skies." It is easy to go up gradually. It is hard in every sense of the word to descend gracefully.

How soon, in many cases, is the joyousness we associate with a new home interrupted by sickness or suffering! The sky was bright; now it is clouded. The orange blossoms were sweet; now they wither. What is the teaching of the divine word regarding such experiences? Sooner or later pain and illness come to all, because we are members of a fallen race; we require discipline; we are under the providence of him who chastises whom he loves, and warns by his providence those who forget him; we are inclined to live for the visible, and to expect satisfaction out of it, and we need to be disenchanted. The recollection of all this will prevent the young home-builders from being paralyzed with surprise or fear; will reconcile them to the training of which suffering is a part; will lead them to refer the issue to the

Lord; and even aid them in giving those unselfish ministrations of care, sympathy and effort which are often in different ways a durable and a lasting blessing to the giver and to the receiver. Many a man has said, "I never knew how true and good a wife I had till I was ill." Many a wife has said, "I never understood of how much thought and tenderness my husband was capable until I needed his care." How often has the sickness of an infant drawn closer and closer the hearts of parents, and brought them under higher influences than those of mere natural feeling! Jeroboam is not the only man who has wished for counsel in the time of sore sickness of a child. "Get thee to Shiloh: behold, there *is* Ahijah the prophet" (1 Kings 14 : 2). The sorrow may come through parent, or brother, or sister. Such experiences often follow fast after times of joy. To have a call from God in this form, and not to heed it, is the sure way to harden the heart and prepare for visitations that are not mercies, but judgments. At such a time it is wise to ask God for self-control, quietness and confidence; to obtain the best medical aid

available; to call for the sympathy and prayers of godly friends; and while, like Mary regarding her mysterious child, pondering and laying up many things in the heart, to do in each hour that which seems best to be done in the way of giving the cup of cold water; and all this with a faith that sees him who is invisible, bringing the sufferers to Christ, as men did to him when he walked the streets of their town as the visible incarnation of compassion and of healing power.*

But other exceptional elements can enter into the life of a home in which faith and patience are sorely tried. A member of it is the occasion of grief, anxiety and shame on account of questionable or absolutely bad con-

* In some instances of severe sickness, for prudential and medical reasons, there is no opportunity given to ministers to bring eternal things to the mind of the sufferer. No general rule of action can be laid down in a case of this kind; but it is generally true that the fitting words and the brief prayer of a minister are helpful rather than otherwise to quiet, hope and improvement. At the same time long experience will satisfy most ministers that too much importance is not to be attached to the expressions of feeling on a sick-bed. The decisions are the most satisfactory that men reach in the days of health and mental vigor.

duct. Many an Esau vexes his mother; many an Absalom humiliates his father. What course does the divine word countenance? To begin with, no unnecessary proclamation of the fact is demanded. There are times when the heart knows its own bitterness, and properly bears its sorrows alone as far as man is concerned. But silence to all that are without, unless proper occasion makes disclosure a duty, is to be coupled with the use of the best means with him or her who is the cause of the solicitude. Not anger but grief, not resentment but compassion, must inspire the tone. The utmost self-restraint is needed. The wrong-doer must see that it is not merely because you are compromised and made uncomfortable, but because wrong is done, that you are burdened.

There are times when a parent is sorely exercised regarding a child. It is a son perhaps, unfavorably placed and in apparent imminent danger. For herself she knows the truth, learned it long ago, and by God's grace will hold it fast to the end. But the child—alas, there is no such advantage for him. Who forgets the picture in the book of Genesis in

which Hagar is the central figure? Ishmael is like to die of thirst. She has laid him under a shrub: she cannot bear to look on his agony. Hark! an angel speaks to the wailing mother in her helplessness. "Arise, lift up the lad, and hold him in thine hand." No doubt she obeyed. She could not find water, but she could do that. "And God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water," went and obtained the needed supply, and his life was saved. So, O desponding mother! you can do. Keep your child to your heart, in your hand. What you can do, fail not and faint not in doing. He can open springs in the desert. He can pour water on him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground. He can pour his Spirit upon thy seed and his blessing on thine offspring (Isa. 44 : 3).

Faithful words of warning and entreaty are to be uttered, and in the spirit of Samuel, who, when told of the rejection of Saul and of the announcement he had to make to him, "cried unto the Lord all night" (1 Sam. 15 : 11). The remonstrance uttered in the morning after such a night is likely to be tender and impressive.

"I can bear anything but their tears," many a wrong-doer has said, as he thought of the pleadings of those who loved him. In order to make such remonstrances of moral weight, we who utter them need to be blameless. The human heart easily satisfies itself if it can say, "He censures me for my course in one direction because it happens to offend or mortify him. He goes just as far in other wrong directions." Self-denial may be made necessary in the effort to reclaim. It may be fitting to say, "I do not for myself feel any danger from it—the game, the play, the society, the 'club,' the party, the entertainment—but it is perilous for you; and for your sake I keep away from it." We must not allow any one to say, He led me up to a certain point, and where his dull and phlegmatic nature could stop at the prudential line, he stopped; but he denounces me because I have not such a nature! Some heroes, and many a heroine, have developed nobleness in God's sight, on this line of duty, when friends misunderstood and even censured their methods.

Sometimes reverses come, and the means

once enjoyed are no longer available. Sacrifices have to be made; valuables have to be parted with; innocent enjoyments have to be given up. The utmost economy has to be exercised in order to preserve self-respect and independence. Such are among the hardest trials of home. Now work has to be done that was never before needful, never before contemplated. And when there is this darkness in the providence of God, nowhere is there such light as in the word. "Now I must toil for myself." Well, but there is dignity in labor, when God makes it necessary. Paul was a tentmaker, and not ashamed of it. Fishermen furnished the Master with friends and apostles, and he was the carpenter's son. It is among the improbable things that he grew up in an industrious community doing nothing, till thirty. God's providence uses such necessities for making strong character. How many men of wealth and power in this land, and indeed in all civilized lands, were poor in their youth! Emerson was not ashamed to tell that he once did without the second volume of a book because he was shown that his mother

could not afford the six cents it would cost at the circulating library. When such a strain is put on the faith and courage of a family, the divine word is the best of all comforters and guides. It teaches submission to the divine will. It asserts its wisdom and goodness. It guides and stimulates to honest effort. It corrects the estimates we form of things. It inspires a healthy self-respect, and makes us strong. Let any earnest person, tempted to discontent, read the close of Paul's first letter to Timothy, with its solemn warnings against the reckless pursuit of wealth, and learn how "godliness with contentment is great gain." Wilson, in his "Lights and Shadows of Scottish Life," draws a charming picture of a family living in comfort on their farm, but suddenly ruined. The announcement is made by the father, but to his surprise his sons and daughters make light of it, show how they can make their way, and fix a "family tryst" for that time twelvemonth, when they meet, with their earnings and their joyous tales of effort and success. It must be a well-told tale that holds its place in the memory for thirty or forty

years; but it is only a tale. It is not, however, fancy, but the faithful Father of all, who through life's vicissitudes teaches us to lay up in store for ourselves a good foundation against the time to come, that we may lay hold on eternal life. In the final gathering we shall rejoice together, as we see how the very trials of earth fitted us for the inheritance that fadeth not away.

> "Our dearest hopes in pangs are born;
> The kingliest kings are crowned with thorn."

But there are bright and sunny as well as dark days in the course of life. Unexpected means sometimes come and a freedom from care is furnished, that were never expected. Members of a family develop with unexpected and encouraging hopefulness. Success is achieved in the face of difficulties. A conversion takes place in the family, and godly parents, half surprised, see some of the seed sown come up and grow. Is there anything that a family should learn from the Bible to do in such circumstances? Why, the Lord, who told the healed man to go home and tell his friends how

great things God had done for him, gives us the suggestion. Death comes and it drapes the family in the garments of mourning. When life comes—even the new young life of the infant born into the world; when spiritual life comes; or when some signal benefit reaches a family from God's hands—why should there not be joyful thanksgiving?

We have our annual autumn festival when the harvest is gathered and the country is glad. Would not a family thanksgiving, when blessings have been received, with a religious service, simple, natural and true to the facts of life, be a fitting acknowledgment? One of the holiest ministers I ever knew had experienced some providential goodness in his family—perhaps the recovery of a sick member. A friend of his, who told me the circumstance, called to make a friendly visit. The thing was talked of. "We shall call the family," said the father; "our friend will lead us in worship." It was midday; but, as my friend described it, children and servants came quickly and quietly, as if it were no rare occurrence, Bible in hand, and the family lifted up together its glad Ebenezer.

A Christian woman lately entered into her rest after a long period of painful suffering. Hardly ever have I conducted a more tender service than by her couch a few months ago, when she had specially gathered together the members of a large family, that unitedly they might seek for her the needed grace and patience. It is good for families thus to call on the Lord's name.

When I compare professor with professor, what a difference between those who were taught early and those that were not! I am much touched at reading in Socrates' Ecclesiastical History the old story, remembered from my childhood, of Origen's father, who used to uncover the bosom of his sleeping boy, and kissing it say, "It is a temple of the Holy Ghost."—JAMES W. ALEXANDER, D.D., *Familiar Letters*, vol. ii, p. 25.

CHAPTER VII.

DEVELOPMENT OF THE FAMILY LIFE.

One's birth-place—T. Carlyle—"Peaceable habitations"—Mutual fidelity—Spirit of marriage vows—Head but not despot—Wife, not woman of fashion—Bishop Johns and Dr. Charles Hodge—Training by proxy—Duff's boyhood—James Hamilton's father—"Honor"—Dutifulness—Practical good sense—Wisdom that is devilish—Loyalty to the family—Confidence inspired—Nettleton—Home-life poisoned—"Refractory egotism"—Marthas with too much to do—"Heaven's fallen sister"—How to lift her up—The power of love—Confidence—Mother and friend.

When Froude would give a just idea of the formative influences that told on the life and work of Thomas Carlyle, he presents his readers with ample information regarding the quiet village of Ecclefechan, in which he was brought up, and lets us see the modest dwelling in which the mother watched and prayed, and for the welfare of whose inmates the stonemason toiled and planned. In this he but follows the steps of multitudinous biographers who realize the connection between the early homes

and the lives they would depict. The birthplace of the subject of a memoir has more than once been placed, by careful art, before the eye of the reader. When we study the features of character of such men as Tennyson, Longfellow, Emerson, Darwin, and others in whose mental and moral development we are interested, we cannot but inquire where and how were they brought up. So the estimate we form of men and of their ways is affected in no slight degree by the knowledge we have of their homes. We extenuate, and in fact excuse, some things in those who are without the helps and encouragements to well-doing which a home provides; and we blame others, on the other hand, as inexcusable, seeing they have all the advantages of a tranquil home. When the evangelical prophet, whose inspired language so reflects the tone of his communications, would represent to us the solid happiness of Messiah's subjects —a true Israel over all the earth, even when desolateness covers Palestine—he gives this as one of the features.* "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings,

* Isaiah 32 : 18.

and in quiet resting places." Praise God, with glad hearts, all ye who have happy homes!

There are certain moral elements essential to the maintenance of a true home, and which are to be sought, cultivated and conserved. The presence of these gracious forces will secure happiness in the lowliest, and the lack of them will destroy it in the most luxurious, dwelling. Foremost among these we place *mutual fidelity*. A long way on this side of follies and crimes on the part of husbands and wives—crimes of which law-courts take notice, and of which society talks—there may be failure to keep the spirit of marriage vows. The power of a "head" over the wife may be used in a despotic and arbitrary, or in a cold and inconsiderate, way. The delicate regard that is due to the feelings of the other may be wanting on either side. The aid of sympathy, counsel and co-operation may be withheld. One may practically say to the other, "That is your duty, not mine; do it, or take the consequences." So life may become hard, mechanical and insipid, and a spot that ought to be a foreshadow of heaven may become a heart-

less business resort, without the restraints of enforced mutual civility.

Let the husband go back in thought to the marriage vows, and to the interpretation that glowing affection gave them on the wedding-day. Have they been kept? Has that high ideal been realized that was then a joy in the prospect of it? Have you shielded from all needless pain and trouble the wife of your choice? Have you considered her nature as a woman, and tried to help, strengthen and elevate her? Have you studied her happiness and aimed at her advancement, in the unselfish, tender spirit of the parents from whom you received her? Have you thought of her as the sharer of a joint happiness, or only as a possession for the furtherance of your well-being? Has the considerate deference of earlier years been retained, or has it given place to a hard, cold and authoritative bearing?* So, too, a wife may well

*In the following quotations a plea is made for woman, and a charge is brought against a man, in both of which there is truth enough to merit reproduction:

"I know that women are too frivolously brought up in France; that their education is superficial and exclusively worldly; that it but ill prepares them for the serious duties

examine herself. You remember the trustful gladness with which you accepted the duties of

of wifehood: all this I grant you; but despite all this, I dare to affirm, as a general principle, that there is not one of them who is not morally superior to the man she marries, and far more capable than he of all the domestic virtues; and I will tell you why: it is because all women have, in a higher degree than you think, the main virtue of marriage, which is the spirit of sacrifice; but it is difficult for them to renounce all when their husbands renounce nothing; and that is nevertheless what they are asked to do.

"You have, perhaps, fancied yourself, sir, a model husband, and in many respects you have been one; I give you that praise; but you have, notwithstanding, a point of resemblance to the mass of husbands, which is, that you make yourself a very clear idea of the duties which marriage imposes upon the woman, and a very vague one of those which it demands of the man. Marriage is not a monologue; it is a piece for two persons. Now, you have studied only one character, and it was not your own. You are too sincere, sir, not to admit that your personal conception of marriage was simply this: to add to the habitual comforts of your life an agreeable accessory in the person of a good and pleasing woman, who should ornament your house, who should perpetuate your name, and who, in short, should bring you, without troubling you too much, a supplement of comfort and respectability. You have busied yourself greatly, like all of your sex, in endeavoring to find that marvellous woman who would make every sacrifice and exact none. You have not found her, and no one will find her, because that rare bird of which you all dream—the domestic woman—necessitates the existence of a bird still rarer—the domestic man."

your place. Have you "submitted" yourself in this spirit, or has your husband had to say, "It is against my judgment, but I must do it or there will be no peace at home"? Have you been intent on managing, controlling, using your husband, or have you been faithfully helping him? "Forsaking all other," not seeking, not appreciating, not responding even by look or tone to their admiration, have you lost yourself in that joint life on which you entered when the pastor said, "What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder"? Has "society," fashion or show engaged time, thought and effort that should have gone wholly to the joy, comfort and usefulness of your husband? Reflect, husbands and wives: have you sought to advance the highest life of each other? Have you done all you ought to have done as in God's sight each to make the other purer, better, more spiritual, more Christ-like? The late Bishop Johns wrote to his life-long friend, Dr. Charles Hodge, "To have a daughter wed to a faithful minister of the gospel, who will be her guide to heaven, as well as her affectionate companion by the way,

is a privilege with which the heart of a Christian parent may well be contented." And when Dr. Hodge was left to mourn the loss of the mother of his children, this was the record he placed on her tomb, "An humble worshipper of Christ. She lived in love and died in faith. Truthful woman, delightful companion, ardent friend, devoted wife, self-sacrificing mother, we lay you gently here, our best beloved, to gather strength and beauty for the coming of the Lord."* The highest thinking and the soundest theology do not kill, but elevate and purify, human sensibilities.

But there is a fidelity to children on the part of parents, at a later time, and of children to their parents, without which the home is other than it should be. What is it to train up a child in the way he should go? Can it commonly be done by relegating the whole work to strangers, from the nursery to the time of graduation? Surely not. It is the penalty that the rich pay for their wealth that supposed social and other demands upon their time separate them.

* Life of Charles Hodge, D.D., LL.D., by his son, A. A. Hodge, pp. 368, 370.

as truly as poverty does the poor. from their children, and seem to justify the delegation of most parental duties to others; and in how many instances with the worst results! Deep tenderness is supplanted by a conventional regard. The father becomes "governor," and the mother is but little recognized as guide and counsellor. The supposed higher training and often "broader thinking" of the school or college, which the wealth of the parents—ahead perhaps of their own education—has provided, all too often put the parents' opinion on a very low level indeed. "Sense of duty," inherent right, propriety, in this or that, and—often enough—religious observances, as urged by the parents, are set down to their early narrow circumstances and their strict up-bringing, and superciliously set aside. Groups of friends are cultivated of whom the parents know little. But this ought not to be, and would not be if parents appreciated their relations and obligations. Few minds have risen to loftier heights than Alexander Duff's, and few names to higher fame than his. Here is his testimony to the Scottish farmer—his father: "If ever

son had reason to thank God for the prayers, the instructions, the counsels and the consistent example of a devoutly pious father, I am that son."* "The fear of offending a man who inspired me in earliest boyhood with sentiments of profoundest reverence and love toward himself, as a man of God, was for many years the overmastering principle which restrained my erring footsteps and saved me from many of the overt follies and sins of youth." Here are the vows recorded by the father of the late Dr. James Hamilton of London, who lived as he wrote—a "Life in Earnest"—on the day of his child's birth: "to devote the remainder of my life to his service and glory; to promote the temporal comforts and spiritual improvement of my wife; to guard against levity and folly; to suppress peevishness and irritability; to cultivate a meek and quiet spirit. O Lord, I am thine; thy vows are upon me."† The genial and gifted son grew up under the inspiration and influence of such a father and of a mother like minded.

* The Life of Alexander Duff, D.D., LL.D., p. 607.
† Life of James Hamilton, D.D., p. 10.

John Randolph had his peculiarities as a man and as a power in his state. Perhaps they were due in part to his training, which had in it two quite opposite elements. One, and that bad as it was powerful, was from skepticism and French infidelity; the other was from his mother; and the latter, there is good reason to hope, triumphed in his life and in the end. "When I can just remember," he says, "I slept in the same bed with my widowed mother. Each night before she put me to bed, I repeated on my knees before her the Lord's Prayer and the Apostles' Creed; each morning, kneeling in the bed, I put up my little hands in prayer in the same form. These lessons, I am now conscious, are of more value to me than all I have ever learned from my preceptors and compeers." Oh, fathers and mothers! be faithful to your children in effort, example and prayer. The first recorded prayer in the Bible is that of a father for his son: "O that Ishmael might live before thee!" (Gen. 17 : 18.)

A certain practical good sense is needed to secure the blessings of home. It is of course conspicuous by its presence or its absence, ac-

cording to the prominence of those who possess or lack it. A prudent father influences the outward family arrangements; an imprudent one deranges many things. A mother of the kind described in Prov. xxxi. is felt in all the house and in the life of each of the family; while a weak, vain and unreflecting wife produces constant embarrassment. A "careless daughter" or a "foolish son" can be an irritating, mortifying, weakening element in a family, which is strengthened on the other hand by the trustworthy wisdom even of a child.

Such good sense is a check on extravagance and improvidence. It is not content with idleness. It anticipates and prepares for the future. It appreciates the fitness of things. It knows the value of a good name and the influence of associations. It keeps aloof from compromising alliances. It discriminates among relaxations, amusements and pleasures. It develops strength by self-denial in fitting circumstances. It is the safety, under God, of a Garfield in the struggles of early youth; it is no mean feature in the life of Washington, in public and in private life, on his farm, or on the field in the

war for a nation's independence. It may be said, indeed, that such wisdom is a gift, and the want of it a misfortune. There are minds, unhappily, without balance, and natures without the power of clear perception. But the sufferers from natural defects are few in comparison with the crowds who yield themselves early to a kind of wisdom which infallible authority describes as "earthly, sensual, devilish." There is a wisdom that comes "from above," which is pure, "peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy." It is not learnt in school or college, though it can be cultivated in both. It is secured in another way: "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God."* The possession of this is the guarantee for stability and for sincerity. It keeps parents from provoking children to wrath, and children from ignoring their parents. It inspires confidence in those who notice us from without, and it preserves the right relations with those who share our lives. It keeps the family in its proper place in the mind of each

* James 1 : 5.

member, so that it is not overborne by "society," pleasure or acquaintances. Few men have done more for God's glory than Nettleton. Born in humble life, with a hard struggle to get an education, and in his peculiar Christian work eminently requiring that discretion for the lack of which so many evangelists have failed in the end, he was from his youth marked by good sense. His room-mate at college records the association as a blessing. "Ever kind, courteous, conscientious and exemplary, unassuming and unostentatious, his words and actions bore the most powerful testimony to my conscience to the genuineness of his religious principles."

The joy of home is always endangered by selfishness, and promoted by the opposite virtue. Let there be constant dwelling by the individual on his or her rights and claims, and a morbid brooding on supposed wrongs, and the seeds of misery are being sown. Questions of precedency, of degrees of attention and consideration, of proportion of means and of expenses, will be raised, and with their discussion will come, all too often, coolness, suspicion,

hard language, and alienation of heart. Jealousy makes mountains out of molehills; it is

> "Agony unmixed, incessant gall,
> Corroding every thought, and blasting all
> Love's paradise."

The suspicious nature creates evidences for its own theories. The perverted spirit sends a kind of blood-poison through the whole nature. Nothing is right to such an one who has a home grievance, and death itself does not always remove the occasion of bitterness. To have the home happy its inmates must each esteem other better than himself; must give credit for honesty of motive and aim to others, and must think more of doing the duties than standing up for the rights of life. There is a "refractory egotism" which—alike in the community, the church, the congregation and the committee—breeds trouble. Of course the narrower and the more secluded the circle, the more the disturbing force is felt. Fair appearances can be maintained before the world when the life in the family circle is one of suspicion, irritating recrimination and intolerable misery. In the divine word, the families of Isaac, of Jacob, of

David, illustrate the point. Even the meek Moses does not escape the vexation. In the Christ-honored home of Bethany the beginning of the evil crops out in Martha's sense of "too much to do," and the Master's seeming favor to Mary. So many a sister, many a brother, has been harassed with grievances mostly imaginary or accidental. Let us avoid all these things. Love is of God. In the church we are by grace, in the family we are by nature, "members one of another." Let mutual unselfish love be as the carpet deadening the sound of every step, as the lamp silently giving its light and diffusing cheerfulness, as the curtain shutting out sun and wind in their season, as the pillow on which the weary head rests and is at peace. Home has been called "heaven's fallen sister." Let us lift it up by fitting it with the love which goes so far to make heaven. Let us banish the embittered selfishness, which is to the life as rust to metal, as the moth to the garment, as the malaria to the body, as "rottenness to the bones." Love will disarm the imitators of Cain, and give to the life of each of us some-

thing of the charm one sees in Jonathan, in John the Baptist, in Peter (2 Pet. 3 : 15) ere he died, in the angels who "minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation."

Mutual confidences will be a fruit of mutual love. It is wise for parents to take their children, as their intelligence develops, into their counsels, and to encourage the like course on the part of the children to them and to one another. How often the girl has a *confidante* who knows much more of her real life than does the mother that bore her! But the girl-companion has only a girl's knowledge, while possibly there are matters to be considered and decided of which a mother's experience and greater knowledge of life would make her a better judge than the dearest bosom friend of her own years. In how many instances are persons compelled in later years to own to themselves and to others, "If I had consulted my father—my mother—before taking the step it would have saved me from many a pang." This confession is made regarding investments of time, of effort, of affection, even of money. To avoid such calamities it is for the parent

to draw out and invite the confidence of children.

"We have careful thought for the stranger,
And smiles for the sometime guest,
But oft for our own the bitter tone,
Though we love our own the best.
Ah, lip with the curve impatient,
Ah, brow with the shade of scorn,
'Twere a cruel fate were the night too late
To undo the work of morn."

It is through our parents and teachers that we are first brought to the knowledge of Christ. Moreover, we do not hang singly, but in clusters. Thus every family should be a cluster of grapes, hanging and drawing its life from the heavenly vine. Every parish should be a cluster of clusters —a cluster like that which the spies brought back out of the land of Canaan.—Hare.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOME GOVERNMENT AND TRAINING.

"Father Abraham"—First "household"—A single dwelling—Building up a family—"What is Abraham to us?"—Communities live—Scattered coals—The patriarch taught—So are we—Sodom's influence—Parents, not deputies—Early impressions—John H. Newman—"Parisian"—Unpaid assistants not principals—Penalties of neglected duty—Parental austerity—Precocious individualism—Its genesis—Hotel life—Imported amusements—The bridge over to ruin—Rich and wretched—Objections—Latent forces—Unequal resistance—Nothing to me—Need for forewarning—The "fortunate"—"One more unfortunate"—Appeal.

THE very first use of the word "household" in our English Bible is in connection with the "father of the faithful." "I know him," said the Lord, concerning Abraham, "that he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord" (Gen. 18 : 19). "Household" corresponds substantially with our word "family," and includes servants, of whom Abraham had many, for we read of three hundred and eighteen

men born in his house. We say "substantially," for in the condition of society in which the patriarch lived he was as absolute in authority over the slaves and their children, and as truly responsible for them, as the ordinary parent is for his sons and daughters. If to command so many where the difficulties must have been so great was a laudable virtue, winning even divine commendation, much more may such virtue be looked for in the Christian heads of a household, where only the inmates of a single dwelling are included.

It will be readily conceded that this is as high a testimonial as could well be given to any man. It is from the Lord, who never utters empty compliments, who knows men's hearts and ways, and who judges justly. That must be a quality of a high order which the divine Judge singles out with such marked approbation. For the Lord connects this fidelity to his trust with the greatness in reserve for Abraham. "Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth

shall be blessed in him? For I know him," etc. How many families have come to nothing —literally become extinct—because they had nothing of that careful and authoritative training Abraham aimed at giving. Talk of founding a family! He who would do it must try to train its members to "keep the way of the Lord." It may be readily said, indeed, that Abraham is little or nothing to us. An ancient sheikh, at the head of a nomadic tribe nearly four thousand years ago, what can there be in common between him and us to make him for us an exemplar? We, it may be added, are of the Christian race and dispensation, and moreover enjoy the advanced culture of this progressive nineteenth century. In point of fact some do blunt the edge of many a rebuke and miss the help of many a good example under the influence of just such views. They are, however, founded on a mistake—a part of that wider error that belittles the Old Testament as antiquated and obsolete. If we read aright the argument of Paul (Rom. 4 : 11, 12, 13, 16), we are the descendants, religiously and spiritually, of Abraham as truly as are Lutherans

of Luther, or New Englanders of the pilgrim fathers. The union is not so close between Hahnemann and the homœopathists, between the Jesuits and Loyola, between Washington and us, as between Abraham and Christians. He rejoiced to see Christ's day; he believed in him; he was saved by him. He received the promises, and the righteousness which was the burden of them, while still uncircumcised, that Gentiles might not be shut out from identification with him, or the hope of a like justification. And our aim—the aim of every Christian and of every Christian church—ought to be not only to induce individuals to believe and obtain life, but to found societies of believers who will be true and faithful and influential in families, in companies, in every department of life, in trade, in social and in political affairs. Communities live and perpetuate themselves when the individual dies; and few better ways exist for doing the devil's work than to disorganize them. Take a coal out of the fire and leave it by itself and it is soon a black and half-burnt cinder. Keep the coals raked together, and they have power to

inflame such fuel as is added to them. No language too strong, therefore, can be employed on the importance of household government and religion.

We repeat, then, that to all parents in their place the principles of those words apply, as they did to Abraham. He had authority: "he will command." So have they. He was to use it for religious ends: "and they shall keep the way of the Lord." So are they. The result would not be merely intellectual or sentimental, but practical—"to do justice and judgment." So it is to be with parents to-day. And this fidelity on the patriarch's part was to constitute a link in the chain of God's favorable providences, leading to the greatness and the blessedness of Abraham and his offspring. The same is emphatically true in the case of all parents who train up their children in the way which the eternal Father enjoins.

In bringing this suggestive word to parents there are other circumstances to which their attention may be properly invited. The occasion of the utterance of the word, for example,

namely, the coming ruin of Sodom, is adapted to awaken thought. The righteous Jehovah is telling Abraham what is to be done to Sodom. He is to learn the blessings of grace. To do this aright, he must know the severity of judgment. God is without variableness. The ages change. He does not. He has always had a left hand and a right hand. Sodom and Abraham's household stand over against one another. In the case of the one we have forbearance, patience, warning, testing, punishing —the steps then, as now, of God's righteous providence. Abraham is to know all this. No man understands redemption until he understands sin. Grace is only known when we know guilt. Hence men to whom sin is a light thing think lightly of the atonement. It is heroic, exemplary, inspiring, winning, in their estimate. In the Bible it is all this, but it is more: it is satisfying law, and he who does that endures the wrath and curse of God (Gal. 3 : 13). Hence deniers of the true and proper atonement are commonly Universalists or Restorationists in the second generation, in some vague form or other contriving to dis-

pose of the effects of divine wrath so that the wages of sin shall not be death.

One other point is worthy of our attention in this matter. It might appear to a hasty reader that Abraham's fidelity was the ground of God's choice of him. But the "I know" of Genesis has all the force of the "chosen" of Paul (Eph. 1 : 4). Hence we have in the latter writer (Rom. 8 : 29), "whom he did foreknow," *i. e.*, know and love, as it is said, "the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous" (Ps. 1 : 6). So the God of Israel says to the Hebrew people (Amos 3 : 2), "You only have I known of all the families of the earth." Can that mean the mere apprehension of omniscience? Can it mean anything else than, "You only have I chosen, taken, blessed, brought from idolatry beyond the flood"?

Does any parent, eager to escape obligation, say, "This takes the pressure from me; I am not bound. God may not know me in this sense. He has not put me under these responsibilities"? Nay, you cannot truly reason thus. God has done for you as for Abraham. He has put you in a Christian land, in his

church perhaps; he has given you knowledge, privilege, covenant advantages, not desired by you, not deserved by you, but enjoyed for no other reason than that it has pleased him that you should enjoy them. You are blessed as was Abraham, and your obligation is like his.

At the risk of seeming to linger unduly on this divine word, we invite the attention of parents to another instructive aspect of these facts. How early in human history did family relations, instructions and discipline come into operation in God's kingdom! Family religion he employs to maintain his church, and many a time when the organic body, as such, is cold and dead, spiritual life has been perpetuated by a true family religion. This point is emphasized in the antithesis between Abraham and Sodom. Over against the doomed city, where even Lot's children laugh to scorn his warnings, where family government is ignored and evil passions have free play, where, in consequence, divine fires are being prepared for its destruction, the opposite line is emphasized, "I know him, that he will command his children and his

household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord."

On parents then, and in some respects emphatically on fathers, the Creator has placed responsibility for the government and training of the household. Servants indeed do not now stand to their masters as in patriarchal days; but, as we shall see, they are not to be overlooked by conscientious heads of families. The day-school teachers are parents' assistants in the work of teaching, but they never can be their substitutes; and no little care should be taken by parents not only in selecting teachers, but in watching the growth and development of character of the young who spend so much of their time beyond the reach of their observation and influence. On this point of selecting schools and watching the results, even where the testimony is the most assuring, it is fitting to give words of caution. Even the most effective teachers can only know in part the life of their pupils. Responsibility is often, too often, divided up, in great educational establishments. Boys and girls are now found in as great numbers in schools as more advanced

students in colleges, and the larger the number the greater the chance of injurious companionship. A certain proportion suffer even in the most carefully-ordered institutions. Especially is there need of care that early lessons of reverence and rectitude be not supplanted. How readily the human heart, naturally inclined to the wrong, receives impressions in early years, it is not needful to prove, hardly to illustrate. One conspicuous case may be noted, where the facts do not rest on hearsay. One of Rome's most notable gains from the English church has been J. H. Newman. His *Apologia pro vita sua* is meant to give the idea that abstract overwhelming conviction, without any biasing influence, determined his action. The writer declares of himself that he was without religious convictions till he was fifteen, and disavows emphatically anything by which his mind could have been unconsciously influenced. But he incidentally mentions that he used to "cross himself" in the dark—why or how he learned it he does not know; that his French master was a Roman Catholic priest; that he found in his earliest verse-book a draw-

ing by himself of a cross when he was not ten years old; that he remembered his father taking him to a Roman Catholic church, where he wanted to hear a piece of music. Other circumstances are mentioned, but with a constant disclaimer of their having had any influence, or their offering any explanation of his passing over, after many years in the Protestant ministry, to the Church of Rome. Any one who has studied human character knows in how many instances a bent is early given to the young mind, to which it, after many years perhaps, yields. This is, indeed, one element in the hope of every parent when trying to influence the young, that early impressions will some day be felt afresh, even though for the time obliterated. Why should the principle work in the direction of good and not also of evil?

After the Revolution, lady refugees from France opened schools in Great Britain, and found sympathy and support. "Manner" and superficial accomplishments were their specialty. The "Parisian" in education was studied and affected as in dress at a later time. Any one who has watched English society knows that

in a certain proportion of cases indifference to Protestantism, or positive Romanism, has been the result. The same thing is true in another form in parts of the United States. The time was when no safety could be hoped for California girls but in nunnery schools; and brief as was the period, it had its effects. We give these as examples, because the influences are so well defined in their results. But the same forces are just as effective on other lines, and the boy may acquire the idea that to be a "man upon town" is the road to happiness, and the girl may go out into life with the conviction—not formulated, perhaps, but none the less solid—that the graces that make success and happiness are quite other than those of her catechism, or even her mother's character. "How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom" was a true and unprejudiced reflection in our Lord's time. Has it become obsolete?*

* Martensen (Ethics, vol. 2, p. 6), looking at modern life from the comparative remoteness of a Danish island, speaks as truly to us as if he lived in London, Paris or New York: "Now the church brings us the gospel, which leads us back from all idolatrous practices, all adulterations of the divine,

There is some danger of even Christian parents relieving their minds of a sense of duty as to their children's religious training, in view of our efficient Sabbath-schools. Parents, these teachers are your unpaid assistants, and you have some responsibility of choice there also. But they cannot be your substitutes. One hour in the week is all too little in which to conquer natural ignorance, distaste for spiritual things, and in many cases positive unfavorable influences. A minister tried to make the acquaintance of the children of a family. He led the chat to the Sunday-school, and their enthusiasm delighted him. But further remarks from them on the subject puzzled him; they alluded to features with which he was not familiar; he found that they were all the time talking of the dancing-school! He left

to the primitive, the genuinely divine, to the only true God, and him whom he has sent; to our heavenly Father's house, which we have forsaken, and walked instead in our own ways, *in our own thoughts of God and of things divine, in our own foolish wisdom, our false and supposed policy, our vain deification of art, our ascription of saving power to culture.*" The lines we have italicised are worth the pondering.

with the feeling that both the Sunday-school teacher and he were working at a great disadvantage.

Remember that in all cases of neglected duty sorrow will come sooner or later; and when it comes early, how keen it is! "A child left *to himself* bringeth his mother to shame" (Prov. 29 : 15). We say early, for we have seen aged parents, alas! sadly reconciled to the ruin of their children. "Very sorry to see it, but no hope!" A mother hears the revels of her son in the next room to her own, and dare not show displeasure for fear of insult. A daughter's life is wrecked, her prospects blighted, and her habits fixed irremovably—except by divine grace—under the very eye of parents, who looked on at the steps of the process. The girl needed to be "kept up," and the doctor ordered a little stimulant, and she could not avoid being fatigued after long nights with "society," and now they and the doctor are equally helpless. It is sad to see a family broken down by the removal of parents; but a more melancholy spectacle is it by far when the young have gone to ruin, and the old stand

alone, enfeebled, humiliated, mourning over the wreck which their indolence or their errors made possible. The harvest is as the seed. How much joy there is, on the other hand, from lives trained with care, pains and prayer, and standing up in their hopeful strength and beauty!

We confess that we present these immediate elements of the harvest to parents because many will appreciate them who are blind and insensible to the remoter results in the region that is unseen and the duration that is eternal. Believers who are living "under the power of the world to come" do not need to be reminded of the awful and everlasting sanctions of God's law.

It is all the more important to deepen, if possible, the sense of parental obligation, because the drift of the time is somewhat against it. "Commanding" is not popular. We do not forget the danger of ascribing features to our own time which have existed equally in all other times, and would be equally apparent to us did we know them as well as our own. Without yielding to this common tendency we can define, and in part account for, a disposi-

tion to precocious individualism and early self-assertion characteristic of our generation, our critics would perhaps say even of our land. A popular female English writer has indicated this feature of the times in a pleasant chapter upon children bringing up their parents in the way they should go. There is reaction, say some, against rigor. Every one can tell you of some melancholy wreck, where an austere father is supposed to have driven his son into dissipation after disgusting him with religion. Society does not always hear the father's side of the case. He is less likely to tell it than the loose-tongued son, who is put on his defence. And society does not hear, or if it does, it does not heed, the far more numerous and better-attested cases—for one cannot always measure the other evil forces that were at work besides the father's strictness—where weak, indulgent, easy-going parents let their children rush down the steep place into the sea of vice and be drowned. There is none too much of Abraham-like "commanding."*

* The writer has looked into many of the alleged cases of lives wrecked by the over-much piety of parents, and often

As evidence that our time has early self-assertion as one of its peculiar perils, we not only appeal to facts; we can assign the reason and give the history. Over and above the freedom of speech and thought, the diffusion of education, the consequent early period at which in general life young people make their decisions and undertake independent work—over and above what may be called the "way" of our land and the genius of our institutions—we have received and accepted outside teaching on this subject—teaching, too, which is one-sided, and so far misleading and mischievous. Kant, Fichte, Rousseau and others of kindred schools have theorized touching the constitution of society on the plan of making the individual the one thing to be considered, and the world the sum of the individuals. But men and women are long under formative and determining influences before they become

enough they take their place alongside of the "Blue Laws of Connecticut," which even educated people frequently quote in ignorance of the fact that they were the malignant caricature of an Englishman who fled from American independence, and probably felt the need of vindicating his course.

such individuals as these philosophers contemplate. Any view therefore of the sum of the individuals will be defective which overlooks all these formative forces. But the formative forces are, or ought to be, primarily in the family. In the degree in which this philosophy rules the family, the subordination of its members to the head will go down. Are we not reaping the harvest of which this school of thinkers scattered the seeds?*

Another consideration deserving thought in this connection is the growing separation between parents and children produced by the habits of our lives. Business men do not live over their offices or stores, as they used to do,

* Who can wonder that with the spread of the above views vague and infelicitous conceptions of woman's rights should obtain? There are real woman's rights, in the wise assertion of which every man must rejoice. But how natural for a woman, not used to broad thinking, to draw her own conclusions from the strong and one-sided magnifying of the individual: "Good! it is all certain and clear as daylight. And here are we women, as numerous as the men, as attractive, as gifted, as much individuals as they are, and we are neither bankers nor brokers, legislators nor voters, neither forward in the law nor honored in the gospel. Let us strike for our rights." There is a history here also.

readily passing up to their families. The representatives of the extinct class that once did this rarely see their children at any length, except on Sabbaths and in holiday time. A larger proportion of the young live away from home for educational purposes than formerly. In fact, as many a parent deplores, glimpses of the children are all that are enjoyed, by fathers at least, and it is all too easy for them to grow away from one another. And as far as domestics are concerned, how many of them come and go in many "establishments" without ever exchanging word or thought with the "gentleman of the house," whom the growing sons possibly designate, in petty imitation of others, "the guv'ner." All this conscientious Christian parents and heads of houses must take into account.*

Nor are we allowed to forget that the urgency and pressure of life's cares, as society advances in wealth, make the work we are inculcating

* A good woman, known to me in other years, often put in her word, when in her presence her husband, a saintly clergyman, was making evening engagements for the future, "Oh, please do not undertake it; stay at home one evening and let me introduce the children to you."

more and more difficult. It is not fathers only who feel this. Incredible and even ridiculous as it may seem to some, there are mothers almost as hard worked with their social as are their husbands with their commercial and professional engagements. The humble mothers are often at their wits' ends about raiment for themselves and their children; but there is a law of compensation running through life, and the rich and fashionable leaders of society, with hardly a limit to their means, and a correspondent in Paris, have often as much care, anxiety and vexation on this very point as have their lowlier sisters. Hence it comes to pass that boys and girls are left to domestics, selected, or, to be accurate, often taken at random, from all nationalities, and all religions or none. From this state of pupilage the young come "under tutors and" governesses, or go to distant schools. So after ten or twelve years one may hear the helpless, distracted cry, "I do not know what has come over my child, or where he—or she—picked up such ways. I am sure they never were seen in us." We do not recur to the added element of peril

in the increasing number of cases where hotel life is a choice or a necessity, and the inevitable mingling of all in the lengthening holidays, and popular "resorts" becoming more and more "crowded." It is difficult to "pull up" a boy for an unseemly word or deed, or to lecture a girl, "on the piazza," before the company.

Perhaps also some consideration is due to the character of the amusements affected by a people rapidly growing in means. Imported from the Continent, some of them; foreign to the early national life, many of them; urged on us like any other object of profitable sale, and sometimes accepted in a way which justifies the caterers in smiling at our ways,—they have modified home life to a considerable degree. Amusements have their place; they are necessary; they are worth studying by those who bring up the young; but they are bad when they bridge over the space between a youth's hereditary or habitual religion and the world's vices and sins. The inmate of a quiet, pure and orderly home till youth has been reached, he comes into one of our great cities. Take him to one of its reputable and fashionable

"places of amusement." It is new, pleasant, fascinating to him. Beside and around him are the cultured, the reputable. He wonders why at home this kind of thing was never applauded. Already pity for his parents' want of culture is finding a place in his mind. Pity is hardening into blame, or something like contempt. There is no vice here. Beside him are nice people. He stands with them. But, ah! he is near, he is being influenced by, subtle sensuality, base though showy intrigue. He is becoming ready fuel for the passion fires, the sparks of which flash around the very door of the place, in the saloon, the gambling-house, and the like. Father and mother had tried to keep him from scenes where the plague is slaying its victims. Pity it is, surely, that he should be helped over the bridge between their safe life and this glittering surface covering "the region and shadow of death."

Just because there are these difficulties, the more need is there for you, parents, to take pains, to feel burdens, to comprehend the situation, to accept your duties and to address yourselves to them. What will it profit you,

O fathers, to have made fortunes for sons if they be spent by the worthless? What good will it do you, O mothers, to have brought up and brought out daughters with marked social success, if their dwellings, however splendid, lack the purity, the fidelity, the love that make a true home, and without which splendid environments are but a vexatious mockery?

Without dealing formally with objections which may be easily raised, and referring our reader to a previous chapter (on the Ethics of the Home), we note some difficulties that may be easily raised. "We often see the children of good parents," it is said, "turn out the very reverse of good." Well, it is true that many things occur in life, even in church life, which prove that the new man is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of man, but of God (John 1 : 13). Yet one must be slow to think that God disappoints faith and fidelity in order to prove his own sovereignty. Some modifying circumstances have probably to be taken into account in forming a fair and complete idea of such cases. This circumstance, for example, is notable, that good men and

women have often grave defects, are often led into serious sins. We do not speak of Jacob's, Judah's, Eli's, David's—all too like the habits of other Oriental chiefs in many things. The outcome of these defects is often seen in the family. What is bad in the parent is worse in the child, especially if his theatre of action be more conspicuous, his means of indulgence greater than his parents'. Just so it is that the character of the first generation of errorists is often good. The outcome of their error, unhindered by restraints that told on their predecessors, is seen in the second. A good man takes wine at his table—never to excess. So does his son. A good man indulges in a game—never gambles. So does his son. But that which never bent the strong tree bends the twig, and at one-and-twenty the son is a ruin.* Or, in the estimate formed

* How many times I have longed to caution fathers who made their own rugged natures—braced and confirmed in country air, and conserved till manhood in unexciting country life—the standard by which to judge their own sons, city born and bred, with an organization of a different kind, and a nervous system such as city life all too often develops. What is safe for the father may be fatal to the son.

from the worthless children of good parents, we must allow for the facts already mentioned—the many cases in which children grow up away from the influence of their parents, at schools, and this in their most impressible years. They who have traced back the cases of marked departure have often enough been able to give the particulars, and say how the temptation and the fall came; how the family moved into Sodom, and Lot's advice and example went for little; or how Dinah made friends among the aliens, and disgrace and bloodshed were the sad consequences.

Some reader of these pages may feel that for him they mean nothing. They speak to parents who have their children around them. But let it be borne in mind that a burning candle does not give light to the right or to the left only, but all around. The principle that binds a Christian parent's conscience influences every believer in his place. "Ye are the light of the world." There should be care in constituting the household. Men should be wise in selecting, women in accepting. The

question should be put to the conscience, Shall I have help or hindrance in building a true home, from him, or her, as a partner? There is need to speak, even from pulpits, and still more from parents' lips, to maidens, the honest words of warning against mere mercenary and ambitious marriages. There is need for kindly warning to girls against acquiring, partly in schools, more commonly outside them, tastes and aims incompatible with lowly and unpretentious work, and according to which life is only worth living when a figure is made; when, even at the sacrifice of all that is true and gentle, dress, luxuries, shows and flatteries are habitually enjoyed. Oh, the misery, keen and humiliating, of a woman, young, fair, sensitive, affectionate, joining her lot, whatever the force of the sacred bond, to a man in whom the animal is much and the conscience is little, on whose whims, caprices, irregular affections, and selfish, perhaps lawless, disposition her happiness must depend! No wonder if lost hope, lost self-respect, lost belief in goodness, should keep her, in the doubtful periods of her power over him, on the verge of despair. Nothing then but

belief in God can comfort and assuage. Better than this a thousand times is it to toil to old age in a garret, "with fingers weary and worn, with eyelids heavy and red," unknown and unnoticed save by the Lord who dwells with the pure in heart, and who crowns with compensating glory those who follow the Lamb and keep their garments clean even through great tribulation. And as for those who, without recognized marriage union and sacred ties, put their lives in hands black enough to snatch at the spoil, what can be said? No wonder that for such the alternative should lie between the plunge of the suicide and the conversion of the fallen into the demoniacal tempters of others.

Parents, heads of families, the duty we have been urging is difficult and delicate, calling for constant thought and prayer; but great is the reward. If God bless your toil, what a joy it will be when the home of earth is exchanged for the heavenly; when petty cares are all ended, vexations all clean gone forever; when no more "a watch is to be kept in a world of ill;" when you and yours are together in mutual confidence, love, joy, perfect

felicity—together forever, and forever with the whole family that is named after Jesus—forever with the Lord!

It may not be amiss to indicate classes of persons exposed to special danger, and demanding, in consequence, peculiar and watchful care on the part of parents. There is, for example, the son of a very wealthy man. He has no absolute need to work; he is supposed to be required by his station and his prospects to learn "accomplishments," which imply associations and occupation of time not favorable to the development of solid character. He is meanwhile liable to the interested and base approaches of the corrupt. He has ample means. He needs emphatically a firm, true and wise friend in his home.

An only child, even in more moderate circumstances, is also exposed. Restraint is as little imposed as possible. It is felt to be hard to thwart "the only young person in the family." The consciousness of freedom, and, by and by, of power, is soon realized. Too early independence is enjoyed, and often enough the too-indulgent parents are

made to suffer keenly for their weakness and neglect.

The sons of widows, again, are in trying positions, whether they be rich or poor. They excuse petty faults in the boys "because they have no father's authority over them," and forget that the bereavement makes greater strictness and vigilance necessary. God help the mothers who have alone to guard and guide young and vigorous lives!

"The sun and the moon and the eleven stars (Gen. 37 : 9). What a beautiful picture—in a dream—of what a family should be! The father as the sun, full of beautiful light, and lighting all about him; the mother as the moon, shining out in her husband's absence, veiling to him when he is in his place; the children as stars of light, or rather as a heaven full of stars."

CHAPTER IX.

THE WORSHIP OF THE HOME.

Natural religion—The Lares and Penates—"Opened with prayer"—What is urged—Regular hours—Grace before meat—What is family worship—Regular at meals—Scripture-reading—Music, or not—Fitting selections—Touching life—Aids to devotion—An example—The parting benediction—The reflex side only—The higher aspect—Unblessed prosperity—Sorrow added with it—"But two of us"—"Only in rooms"—"So little time"—"Strangers with us"—"No gift of prayer"—An elder's preparation—"Family take no interest"—Difficulties to be conquered—Prayer put aside by society—Second-generation sinning punished by the third—Illustration—Family unity—The priest in the home—A soldier's lasting fame—A prophecy of heaven.

THE teaching of nature is not to be despised. "The heavens declare the glory of God." The instincts of human nature are not to be disregarded. There is a law written on the heart. The best class of Pagans, therefore, felt bound to honor the gods in their homes. They had their tutelary deities of the dwelling. It is likely enough that the ornamental objects which it has everywhere been customary to crowd

upon the chimney-piece are the representatives of the images of the household gods—the Lares and Penates. According to Plato the best Grecian town houses had an image of a deity in the hall, and in the country places a statue of a deity in the open space before the door. Daily worship in the household was a Roman custom in the best times of the nation.

Christian life does not less own the divine claims than did Judaism in its morning and evening sacrifice, or less than heathenism in its best estate. Assemblies of Christians for high purposes are commonly opened with prayer. The legislatures of Protestant lands thus own dependence on divine wisdom. Christian monarchs take their crowns with solemn religious rites. It would be strange indeed if Christian households, as such, did not acknowledge God. The heathen of Greece and Rome might well rise up in judgment against those who enjoy a divine revelation, and in whose homes God is not honored with praise and approached with prayer.

Before making an argument for family worship let it be clearly stated what we recom-

mend. The formidable aspect the service may wear to some will thus probably disappear.

There is in any family that has even an approach to orderly life a fixed hour for meals, and usually the meal collects the members. Even where spiritual religion is not professed, in many circles thanks are offered to God, and his blessing is sought upon the bounties he gives on the table. On the same principle, and with no more trouble, the members of a family can be brought together, perhaps before a meal, perhaps after it, and led to join together in an act of worship. The head of the family takes the Bible—in many a home it is found on the breakfast-table—and reads a portion. It is sometimes not unfit for him or her to choose or indicate the portion and ask one of the family to read it. An elder son may thus be habituated, without fear of his own voice, to do the like in his own home at some future day. If there be ready means—without embarrassment—for singing praises in language familiar to all, so much the better.* Children

* The binding up of the metrical psalms, paraphrases and hymns with the Bible gave great facility for this in the old

come to be interested in this part of the exercise. Where a musical instrument is in the room a woman's tact and the "touch of a delicate hand" may aid in the sacrifice of praise. Better, however, to omit this, to leave music out, than to risk anything out of harmony with the simple, reverent, informal, natural act of homage to the King of kings, the source of all the family's blessings. The Scripture reading ought not to be tedious, whether preceded or followed by, or even without, praise. A wise person will proceed on some plan. In many cases to read through the word is good—omitting of course such passages as serve other ends than the growth of spiritual life, such as genealogical tables—portions of Scripture which have their uses in other directions—as a part for example of the mass of Scripture "evidences." The presence of children would, to a wise parent, be a determining element in the selection. The narrative portions will be freely

world. So Bibles and prayer-books had Tate and Brady's Psalter bound up with them. The dispensing with these arrangements, through the use of voluminous books of praise, is not an unmixed gain.

used. The parables of the Lord might be read consecutively. The same course might be followed with the miracles, or with the more formal discourses, or with the life of Paul, or with the life and works of John. At times a prophetic portion may be read and connected in a single word with its fulfillment in the New Testament. An Old Testament biography may be followed out with a reference to any New Testament allusions to it. Any events of interest in the family, a birth, a death, a marriage, may dictate the portion. How fittingly 2 Cor. 5 : 1–10; 1 Thess. 4 : 13–18; Rev. 21 : 1–7; 22 : 1–7 may be used when the shadow of death is over the dwelling! Perhaps some one is suffering. Heb. 12 : 1–13 gets a new signification at such a time. Some one is going on a journey, or has safely returned. Then the "Traveller's Psalm," as the 121st has been called, may well be used. It is a wedding day. The second of John may carry the group to that in Cana when Christ was a guest. It may be fit in some instances—as where there are domestics with perhaps few opportunities of learning truth—to add a word of explanation or appli-

cation. This should always be brief, simple, informal. The great thing to be kept in mind is the bringing of divine truth to the mind, as the words of God to it; the making of the impression that the word is adapted to all men's conditions; and that it is not a mere code of laws, but in sympathy with all human experiences and adapted to all our vicissitudes. In some cases it interests to have the reading verse by verse in turn, each having his or her own Bible.* The word being thus read—and there need be no monotony—prayer is to be offered. There are cases in which timidity or other kindred causes will prevent what is known as free prayer, and where suitable "family prayers" are

* Occasionally this plan is employed with advantage where there are children, and where any others—domestics for example—can take their turn without embarrassment. The writer, however, has often seen it in use where it failed of its end. An infelicitous pronunciation by one upsets the gravity of the rest; conscious bad reading produces embarrassment. But worst of all, instead of taking in the meaning of each verse, some are looking out for theirs and getting ready for the enunciation. This, in my judgment, is a grave objection to responsive reading everywhere. There are many who have thus read the Psalter month after month, for years, with no corresponding knowledge of its meaning.

provided. The selection of the book in this case should be wisely made, and the particular part to be used at any time should be known beforehand.* But ordinarily there will be no difficulty to a devout person, accustomed to the right use of the Bible, in uttering before God the thanksgiving and the petitions proper to the condition of the family. It is not long, eloquent or "beautiful" prayers that the divine Father desires. It is the offering up of the desires of the heart to him. A little effort will overcome difficulties; and the object is worth

* If any reader is at a loss to know such a book, his minister can usually aid in the selection. Most publishers of religious books can recommend a volume. Ryle, now bishop of Liverpool, has framed his comments on the gospel for family reading. "Family Prayers," by the Rev. Ashton Oxenden and the Rev. C. H. Ramsden, will suit many. "Prayers for the Closet and the Family," by the Rev. G. B. Burns, D.D., a Scottish clergyman, will be found useful. The Rev. W. Gregg, D.D., Toronto, has edited an excellent "Book of Prayers for Family Worship." Many years ago the present writer, with the view of aiding the timid just beginning family life, issued "Prayers for a Month, for Working People." The book has been reissued in this country with some changes. On few things does the writer look with more gratitude than the usefulness it has had among those first contemplated in its issue.

the effort. God is to be praised; fitting, concise mention is to be made of his ordinary goodness—his care through the day or the night; and of special benefits, as the recovery of a member from sickness. Prayer is offered for continued goodness—for help in all duties—for grace for each, parents, children—and if there be domestics, for them, with special reference to anything unusual in the home or circle. Here is an illustration from life. After breakfast the family moved into an adjoining room in which stood a musical instrument. A few verses were sung, all the household joining, and even the baby, used to the exercise, sat with quiet attention on the nurse's knee. A brief reading of Scripture followed. The mother of the chambermaid, it was known to the family, was seriously ill. As she sat down the head of the house said, "How is your mother to-day, Sarah?" A quiet answer was given. She was remembered in the prayer. "If it please thee, Lord, restore the health of her of whom we have been speaking, and comfort her and all connected with her." It made the service real. It expressed the oneness between the family

and the humble girl who worked there for her bread. It represented true Christian sympathy. This man was a rich merchant and a strong man of affairs; but he could feel for and with the anxious daughter. How many lectures on the evidences of Christianity, how many homilies on fidelity to employers, would produce as deep an impression as this petition? And this is to look at it only on its reflex side.

Take another case. It is a plain farm-house, and a Sabbath evening. The family is gathered together. The catechism is recited, the younger ones dropping out one by one where mother says "that is as far as she has got." The family meal is taken, and—the family being all at home together—it is a little more luxurious than usual, but of easy cookery. Then comes worship, in which there is nothing unusual until the father alludes to "him who is to go from home to-morrow." A boy was leaving before daylight the next day for his first college year. The strong man's voice broke down, and his utterance became choked. There was a moment's silence and a sympathetic sigh from the mother. "Keep him

in thy fear, and prepare him for thy service." Can you suppose that boy soon forgetting the tone and the words? Could the memory of them be other than a check on him if temptation invited to folly or sin?*

* Our readers will thank us for reporting a fragment from the Life of Dr. Lawson, a good minister of the old and ceremonious time, by Dr. McFarlane. The scene is a Scottish house; the time the death of a dearly-loved son of the minister; "the family in great distress—weeping and lamenting over the dead; Dr. Lawson sitting in the midst of them, calm but overwhelmed. After a short pause he arose and said, 'Oh, Mrs. Lawson, will you consider what you are about? Remember who has done this. Be composed; be resigned; and arise and accompany me down stairs, that we may all join in worshipping our God.' And so they all went down with him to the parlor. He then read out for praise those solemn verses of the 29th paraphrase:

'Amidst the mighty, where is he
Who saith, and it is done?
Each varying scene of changeful life
Is from the Lord alone.

'Why should a living man complain
Beneath the chastening rod?
Our sins afflict us, and the cross
Must bring us back to God.'

"Before he raised the tune, he paused for a moment, looking round upon the weeping circle, and then, with faltering accents, said, 'We have lost our singer this morning; but I

But this is to look at but one, and that the lower, side of this matter. God hears prayer. We wish to show how the prayer of the family is to be—not form or decent ceremony, but—real, humble, trustful service, in which, guided by the word and spirit of God, the family brings the details of actual life with becoming fervor before the divine and all-ruling Father with gratitude, submission, hope, confidence, and in which the weak human souls take hold together of infinite strength. He honors them that honor him. He dwells with them who invite his presence. That presence lightens the gloom of life, and brightens all its joys. His blessing gives that safe prosperity with which no sorrow is linked, as it is sure to be where he is ignored in unblessed prosperity. Oh, men and brethren whom God has placed at the head of families, where he gives you homes, be sure that you set up altars!

We can conceive objections readily started.

know that he has begun a song which shall never end;' and then proceeded with the worship, completing a scene as holy and sublime as can well be imagined."

Yes, the memory of such scenes has helped to make strong many a "son of the manse."

"Why," says one, "we are but two of us—my wife and I; we can hardly be called a family." Even so. What saith the Scripture? "Where two or three." "We are not in our own house, only in rooms." Very well. Worship has been conducted in mines, and in barns, and on the decks of fishing-boats. You have a room. Consecrate it by united prayer; it will render it home-like. And if God add to your responsibilities, you will be all the better fitted for them. "We have so little time." It will save time, temper and strength to begin and end the day with God. The writer was once the guest of a plain man, whose house he had to quit in the early Monday morning. Coming down at the appointed hour, the breakfast was on the table. I had not counted on such care at such a time, and said so. "Ah," said he, "you know Philip Henry used to say, 'Prayer and provender hinder no man's journey,'" and a brief, simple family worship followed that was "true to the truth of things." I had preached to him the Sabbath before. Religion had made that country farmer a refined gentleman, and he then unconsciously preached to me. Says

one, "We often have strangers with us." So much the more reason for your confessing Christ before them. How much good it may do them! And it will show them what manner of persons even politeness will require them to be in your house. "I have no gift of prayer," says one. Have you desires, thankfulness, hopes? Can you express such to men? Do likewise to God. He sees the heart; he will aid the tongue; and the effort to honor him will not be in vain. It is worth making. No service to God is worth much that costs nothing. A godly man was chosen to the eldership. He was expected then to pray in public, and he was unused to it outside of his family. He was at the head of the largest business of its kind in a great capital, and had many a care. But he accepted the duty, performed it well, and never mentioned his difficulty but to his pastor. When his useful life closed there were found among his papers the careful preparations he had made with his Bible and his pen, for the discharge of his duty. This plea is sometimes urged by men who could remove it with one-tenth of the effort they make about

minor matters, trifles, social accomplishments. I have heard it urged by one who spent hours daily in the effort to play the flute—to the sore affliction of the family. "My family take no interest in it." This is, undoubtedly, one of the most discouraging things to be encountered. To have little difficulties put in the way; to find sons and daughters habitually presenting themselves after worship, or finding trifling reasons for leaving before it; to see them ungracefully submit to it, and declare by their manner how tiresome it is.—this is indeed depressing, and will sometimes make the very exercise hard to you, and raise the question, Is it best on the whole to persevere? Yes. What other duty do you abandon because it is difficult, or because you have defective sympathy in it? The more their indifference, the greater their need. Guard carefully against any real cause for complaint, and persevere. The Lord hears and sees, even though your own flesh and blood, for whom you toil and pray, be indifferent. The honest effort may be remembered when you are beyond the reach of human discouragement. "Oh! if we had father back

again! We should never vex him again. He should never be left to family worship with only the servant." That was the pitiful cry of a daughter in her desolateness, when her father's prayers had been exchanged for praises which no obvious lack of sympathy shall ever chill.

No, no. The objections and difficulties are nothing compared with the privilege and the duty, and the blessing that fidelity to the duty brings. In many a home there is prosperity mainly through the efforts of God-fearing and faithful parents. They die and leave their inheritance to their children. Prosperity brings society and social demands. "The voice of rejoicing and salvation" was "in the tabernacles of the righteous," through whom the prosperity came. But it is not here. The children grow up without godly influences at home. They are under every force—that of fashion, that of "culture," that of self-indulgence, that of temptation, that of the carnal mind—every force but that of religion. In the dance, the song, the dramatical recital, they have acquired skill at the cost of money and time. Their parents are

proud of them, but not indeed without some secret misgivings and self-reproach when they remember their own up-bringing. But "times have altered," and they must do as others of their class do. And so the drift of things receives no check, until it is found that one of the sons unhappily "drinks;" another is reckless about money, and "society"—hollow and deceptive and mean—which caresses him to his face whispers behind his back that it is not wise to be too much acquainted with him—that he borrows and forgets to pay; and so the second generation unlearns the lessons taught by the first, and is often punished by the disgrace, humiliation and dependent poverty of the third. A prayerless family will soon be a godless family, and a godless family will soon find the way of transgressors to be hard. "Yes, I am rich enough," growled a successful man, "but where's the use of it? To make money with hard work for a scamp who is longing to get it, and for his connections, that lie to me when we meet and lie about me when we part!" Yes! poor man and millionaire! He had done everything for that "scamp" but to

train him up in the fear of the Lord. There had been effort made by others for the heir of this insipid fortune. There was a time when he seemed not far from the kingdom of heaven. But he went back. His father did not want him "to go to extremes." He saw that to go forward on that line was to break with a hundred things natural and fit "for a person in his position." He went back, and of course was henceforward farther from the kingdom and more set against it than ever before. He became intensely occupied with pure frivolity. He was the busiest man of his set about pleasures. His prospects brought him showy and fashionable minions of both sexes. Company on week-day and Sunday absorbed his time. Where money flowed freely, channels for it were readily opened—around the gaming-table and on the race-course. A marriage was made in the line of this life. Even the gayest types of this sort of enjoyment become insipid and tire one, and stimulants become necessary. At first they are servants, then tyrants. All this the millionaire knew; hence the prospects of his heir gave him no pleasure. And hence the

limitations in his will, in view of which his memory is occasionally cursed by those who are spending his hard-won and disappointing acquisitions.

Parents and heads of families! even if the household be only like Naomi and Ruth, maintain God's worship in your dwellings. God has in innumerable cases blessed it in restraining, in guiding, in encouraging. Even the memory has been many a time a means of grace through which spiritual life has come.

After Sennacherib of Assyria had met with such a check in his attempt upon the kingdom of Hezekiah, the king of Babylon, then under Assyria, and hoping for independence, thought an alliance with Judah a politic step. So he sent letters of congratulation on his recovery from sickness, and some presents, to Hezekiah, with a view to such a league. He did not care for Judah, but as Judah might be used for his own ends. Hezekiah was a good man, but even good men make mistakes. He had no business as king of Judah to consider any overtures from a heathen ruler; but he "hearkened" to the ambassadors, and showed them

all his treasures and all his military stores, as though he said, "We have had a war, to be sure, but, you see, we have still resources enough." Isaiah was sent to him with, among others, this suggestive question:* "What have they seen in thine house?"

How often the Babylonians make such visits! For the religion of godly families they care nothing, but their influence, names, means, standing, count for something. Christians! what do they see in your houses?—empty show, display, extravagance, art products that are hardly modest, heartlessness and easy and perilous self-indulgence? or do they see unity, purity, simplicity, godliness, running through every arrangement, softening and sweetening every part of the life, and elevating even common tasks to the dignity of deliberate and holy service? Are you saying practically, and teaching all under your influence to say, with the psalmist, "I will walk within my house with a perfect heart"?

Do you wish to have family unity preserved

* 2 Kings 20 : 15. The whole passage is worth careful study.

and dignified and consecrated? Bring all around the throne of the heavenly grace together. Do you wish to repose in your home, to live quiet and peaceable lives? This will tranquillize the spirit, sustain the activities, strengthen resolutions, and, like oil to machinery, nullify friction, sweeten temper, and make all movement easy and pleasant. Would you banish disunion, jarring, mutual coldness and suspicion? Let the hearts all blend under your loving direction around the divine Father's throne. Would you live in the grateful recollections of Christian children? Then be the faithful priest in your home, the devout minister at its altar. Would you, on the other hand, alienate the divine favor and take your place among God's enemies? You can easily do it. "O Lord, . . . pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not on thy name."

But we hope better things of you. We would fain have you on the same line with "the friend of God," acting as becomes the seed of faithful Abraham. "Ye have heard of the patience of Job." Perhaps you too have defective sym-

pathy at home from wife or children. Well, imitate him in his efforts (Job 1 : 5). You may have many cares, personal or public, like David. Do not fail to bless your household (1 Chron. 16 : 43), and guard against the inconsistencies which marred his good intents. Cornelius was honored and prosperous. He had pious servants about him. He was a Roman officer. His "set" did not help him to godliness. But God blessed him. He was devout, feared God, and inculcated that fear on all his family, and prayed to God always (Acts 10 : 2, 30). And how much blessing came to him! What immortality has any other Roman officer in history like his? Make the God of Bethel yours, and let your household go out in life under the influence of truth, linked with every dear memory and every sweet association of home, making it to them a type and prophecy of heaven.

What then is HOLINESS? It is not a single habit; it is not a complement of habits; it is a NATURE, and by *nature* we are to understand, not the collection of properties which distinguish one being from another, but a generic disposition which determines, modifies and regulates all its activities and states—the law of the mode of its existence.—JAMES HENRY THORNWELL, D.D.

CHAPTER X.

SECONDARY ELEMENTS IN TRUE HOME-LIFE.

Divine government uses means—"Within our means"—Results of imprudence—The alternative—A wise heroine—A broad battle-ground—Beginning honestly—The poets—How to do it—The power of gentleness—"A real lady"—One's connections — Hospitality — "Dear five hundred friends"—Cicero on friendship—The communion of saints—The ideal of a friend—"Faithfully, yours ever"—The true humanity—Sullen obedience not obedience—Grown-up children—Giving confidences—Parents not lodging-house keepers—"What is the matter with father?"—Mother a confidante—Hungry hearts.

In every form of human life the first thing is the fear of the Lord and the right relation to him. "Wisdom *is* the principal thing."* "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness."† But a man cannot count on success in business, in a profession, even in the ministry, simply because he fears the Lord. The Lord's government of the world implies the adaptation of means to ends, and no amount of religious feeling will take the place

* Prov. 4 : 7. † Matt. 6 : 33.

of adequate training and the common qualities called into play in any form of human effort. "He is a most excellent man," said one to me of a mutual friend, "but he knows nothing of business. I pity him." On precisely the same principles it is worth while to devote a chapter to certain secondary elements in the happy life of a family.

"Where shall we live?" is one of the earliest questions the married have to ask. The bride cannot imagine herself comfortable in any place inferior to that she has quitted. Why, her very wedding-gifts would be out of harmony with any very moderate accommodation! And what would her friends say, or think, when they called on her? So, regardless of the income to be counted on, arrangements are made on the scale of the rather showy wedding-gifts. But one year's expenses have not been met until care and embarrassment begin. The husband is humiliated by reminders—more or less intended or articulate—that he cannot keep his wife in her former station, that she has had to go down with him. He begins to have a group of cares not shared with his wife.

There is a territory between them which neither touches, and it grows larger and larger. There will always be "friends," thoughtless or spiteful, to suggest, meddle and direct. Unlooked-for demands for money arise. Things are more expensive than they supposed. She begins to see that every fresh call on him in a measure disturbs him. He is painfully conscious of it also, and a certain artificial and dramatic manner is assumed to cover the confusion. One of two results comes sooner or later. The worse of the two is holding on, running into debt, mortgaging the future, perhaps throwing themselves on relatives; or possibly a secret and silent misapplication of means, by him, of which the outcome is ruin with disgrace. The other and the better is a resolute and joint facing of the situation. "Come, George, we married for better for worse; we have not means—it is no fault of yours—to live at this rate. We must be self-respecting and independent, and we must keep something against a rainy day. Let us get on a different scale, and at once. About the nice furniture and my wedding-gifts, you say.

What about them? We are not bound to live by a gilt French clock. You are my great wedding-gift, George. The others we can store away. I'm going to look for a place within our means, to-morrow; and I'll do with one girl." "God bless you, Anna! You have lifted a load off my mind. I'll work with a new life, and we shall have a place yet for the French clock that we can afford."

The prudence needed in this department extends to a hundred details—to dress, to society, to the receiving of friends, to hospitality, to holiday arrangements, and notably to the management of children. The courage to accept the situation, by which a few decisive victories are gained at the outset, is a blessing to the life. "But what will our friends say, Anna?" "Never mind them, George. We do not live on them. Let them mind their own business. You and I have to do our duty in the place where Providence has put us, and any who do not understand us and approve it are not worth thinking of as friends." "God bless you, Anna! you are right; you are a heroine." And George goes to his work "with

a will," perhaps calculating mentally what personal expenses he can well drop for the sake of so noble a wife. True Christian prudence lives within assured means, and aims at a margin for contingencies after setting aside a portion for the highest uses. "I cannot afford a seat in church," said one who drove an equipage never affected by the pastor. This is bad, even as a matter of ordinary wisdom. Let God be honored with a fitting proportion of one's means or earnings, as the case may be, and his blessing will attend the employment of the rest. "I do not know how it is; I cannot tell where the money goes," said a showy member of "society." "Well, at any rate," said her matter-of-fact kinswoman, "it does not go to the church or the missions; better perhaps if it did." "Honor the Lord with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: so shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."* One of the most generous givers I ever knew, one who led the way in some degree in Christian liberality, who

* Prov. 3 : 9, 10

seemed to a friend to go even beyond the limits of prudence, was asked by him, "Does your fortune increase at this rate?" Raising his foot, and pressing it down as if to keep something from rising, he said, "I cannot keep it down." It was like a fountain springing up, whether he would or not. Why have not others a like experience?

Does any one ask how such prudence is to be gained? We may get a hint from Cowper:

> "Wisdom and goodness are twin-born; one heart
> Must hold both sisters, never seen apart."

We may get another from Goethe: "Wisdom is only in truth." All else is cunning, often shallow, and never elevating. Wordsworth is right when he says:

> "Wisdom is ofttimes nearer when we stoop
> Than when we soar."

But Bayard Taylor carries us farthest:

> "The stream from wisdom's well
> Which God supplies is inexhaustible."

The last word, then, may well be from the apostle James (1 : 5): "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all

men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him."

We place gentleness near prudence in the list of the secondary virtues of the home. It gives the right tone to one's voice. It checks sharpness without an effort. It tranquillizes other minds when disturbed over small vexations. It keeps away gossiping criticism and cynical sharpness. The virtue that is mainly displayed in the censure of others' vices feels that no response can be drawn from true gentleness. It tells on all within the home. A self-asserting maid with an exaggerated estimate of her place, and a higher idea of her rights than of her duties, is surprised, and, if there is any good in her, delighted, to find that a gentle employer takes her into the family, feels interest in her as a fellow creature and a woman. So it serves, as Martensen puts it, "to draw domestic servants into closer connection with the family, to make them members of the household, and to restore, in place of the merely legal relation now existing, a moral relation of mutual fidelity and trustful devotion." "She's a raal lady, she is, and I

wouldn't vex her for the worrald," was the way one who had never read the *Christian Ethics* expressed and illustrated its influence.

This gentleness tells widely in a circle of friends. A married person comes into a new relation to the kindred of the other, with every variety of tone, feeling and character. It is not in human nature to take them all, in a mass and alike, to the heart. But gentleness is civil to all; it responds to the good in all; it does not avow scorn and hatred where it feels no love; it can even "wink hard" and not see dead flies that spoil the ointment. It overcomes evil with good. It actually softens those with whom it comes into contact; and in its atmosphere those plagues and pests of life, family quarrels, lose their malignant power to blight and curse. It dictates a true hospitality, not that which gives an entertainment where ostentation and the enormous expense are the leading features, but that which brings together and sets at ease the stranger, the people who are the better for knowing one another, and the friendless. Such is the hospitality of the Scriptures. It is possible to receive one's

"dear five hundred friends" without one grain of hospitality in the act, or one element of true friendship. Gentleness lays the basis of true friendly association in its sincerity, its reticence where "silence is golden," its repression of self in its hearty appreciation of others. Alas! alas! as the years advance, and cares multiply, and death desolates, the range of one's heart-associations becomes more and more limited; but true gentleness clings to the long-known and well-tried with "fidelity which owns their frailties, but also appreciates their excellences." It was natural for Cicero, Aristotle and others —great and noble in many things—to write much of friendship. They did not know the communion of saints, the brotherhood of believers. The Scriptures assume this and give us no treatise on friendship. But they give us Jonathan and David, Paul and Barnabas, with their long co-operation and their one sharp contention, for they were human. They give us, above all, the Redeemer and the disciple whom he loved, and they put the crown of a true glory on their fellowship when the Master, divine and yet human, says, "I call you not

servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth: but I have called you friends." So the true gentleness is not all aglow with emotion to-day and cold as an iceberg to-morrow. It is not an Arctic winter to old friends and a heat that is oppressive to the new. It is the genuine, unconscious, spontaneous response of a true nature to the counsel of Scripture, "Thine own friend, and thy father's friend, forsake not."*

So far we have noticed the duties incumbent on the heads of families, who naturally fix in a good degree, at least in the first instance, the society and the kind of friends who will influence themselves in a variety of ways, and who still more influence their children. But there are qualities in the members of a family—towards their head and towards one another—on the cultivation of which much of

* On this practical matter in most lives it is well to study such passages as Prov. 17 : 17; 19, 6; 27 : 6, 9, 14, 17, and such portions as Rom. 16 : 1–16. What a glimpse of a great man's tenderness, "Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine." How little they know the Bible who find in it no pure "sentiment," no tender friendships, no "humanity." It is full of the true humanity.

the sweetness and light of a home will depend. On the one side there is authority; on the other there is to be subordination. On the one side the authority is to be employed with gentleness and unselfish wisdom. "I require you to obey, not to gratify my self-love, but because it is God's will, and it is for your good," is the tone of a wise father.* The obedience is to be cheerful, to be rendered not by constraint, but willingly. Friction is out of the question. Sullen obedience is not obedience at all; and to render it with the air

* A mistake is sometimes made by sincere and conscientious parents in dealing with their children. They "harp" upon trifles in bearing, demeanor, speech, in the presence of the family and of others. They mean to be faithful, but they defeat their own ends. A word spoken to a spirited boy by himself, implying respect for his feelings, will be more effective than fifty such repetitions of a rebuke like "Charlie, why will you put your elbow on the table?" On the latter plan Charlie will be apt to resent secretly the admonition, and to please himself with the hope of a coming time when he can do as he likes, or even "speak back." "A word fitly spoken" to Charlie alone will only need a kindly glance of the eye to supplement it if he forgets himself, and to keep him right, and it will be less vexatious to guests and others at the table. It will be "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

of a martyr, a victim to tyranny, is among the greatest wrongs possible to sensitive and affectionate parents.

There comes a time in the advancing years of children when they are still under their parents' roofs, dependent, more or less, upon them, but being "of age," they are not ordered and directed as in the time of pupilage. It is a trying time to many a parent. "Are my children not only to grow up, but to grow away from me? Am I to become to them no more than any other acquaintances they have?—less perhaps than some they have?" So many a fond heart has asked, and—with a sad disenchantment—has heard the answer in the affirmative. Then comes such pensiveness as only experience of life brings, and which divine grace consecrates into a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better.

"I came at morn—'twas spring. I smiled;
The fields with green were clad.
I walked abroad at noon, and lo!
'Twas summer. I was glad.
I sat me down—'twas autumn eve—
And I with sadness wept.
I laid me down at night, and then
'Twas winter, and I slept."

So many realize the autumn when their children—like Herbert's flowers in his hand, to which "time did beckon, and by noon their fragrance stole away"—seem to give out their confidences to others, no longer to them. When daughters make their plans; when sons come and go with no volunteered statement of intention or of results; when parents wait till the midnight hour for their children, and hear from them nothing of where they have been or what they have been doing, any more than if they were the lodging-house keepers; when questions reluctantly put drag out abrupt and meaningless answers.—then, though they do not mean it, they are killing the true home-life, and laying cruel burdens on lives less elastic than they once were, from the very cares and struggles of which these children now reap the advantage. "What is the matter with father?" He seemed silent and depressed. "Is he not well?" Yes, he was well enough, but the son who put the question had been off for several days, and did not think it worth while to say where or why. Oh, ye sons and daughters, who will never know until the years

teach you the cares and solicitudes through which you have become what you are, study to be as gentle, as considerate, as confiding to your parents in their places as you are to acquaintances and friends in theirs. Girls, you will never have so disinterested friends as your parents. Others will flatter you; they will tell you the truth in love. Let them be your nearest, most trusted friends—your mothers your closest confidantes until you owe allegiance in another home. Young men, there are things, doubtless, which you know better than your fathers, for of course this generation is enormously in advance of its poor predecessor; but there are things known to them by experience that are not taught in school or college, nor weighed among your friends; and—apart from the duty you owe them, apart from the obligation which a true chivalry suggests to give loving confidence for loving confidence—it is wise for you to avail yourself of their unselfish, perhaps dearly-bought, wisdom. "He was my son, and I leaned on him; he was my friend, too, and he trusted me." So said an aged father when he heard the news of the

death of one of the bravest and purest of young men. From the want of this many a spirit has been hungry, and life has been clouded in its later time, for

"The day drags through, though storms keep out the sun;
And thus the heart will break, yet brokenly live on."

Wisdom, in things secular and prosaic, toward self, toward them that are without, toward the present and the coming; gentleness toward one another and all around; and confidence, mutual, unreserved, and to the end,—these are specimens of the secondary virtues which realize this pleasant picture.

"By the fireside still the light is shining,
The children's arms round the parents twining;
From love so sweet, oh, who would roam?
Be it ever so homely, home is home."

It would be easy, of course, to add to the catalogue of secondary virtues needed, and to be cultivated, in the home. We might urge the value of sincerity as opposed to mannerism, —conventional profession closely akin to lying. The place of industry and activity might be defined, and the value of these qualities, with the allied virtues of economy, thrift and fore-

thought, might be strongly stated. "I am of opinion," says Tholuck, "that they are right who affirm that divine wisdom has ordained the trades and professions of this earth for *three* wise purposes. In the first place, that craftsmen and artists may devise ever more and more beautiful and perfect forms with which to invest matter to the glory of God, who has endowed the spirit of man with all such skill and knowledge; secondly, to exercise our brotherly love in making life more pleasing and delightful, inasmuch as in such matters we must be beholden to each other; and finally, for the furtherance and accomplishment, as far as practicable, of wise and pious designs both in civil life and in the church, whether tending to the welfare of the body or to that of the soul."* Good habits, useful employments, domestic and social virtues, are not themselves religion, just as health, vigor and activity are not life; but they are capacities which it is wise and right for the living to guard and to cultivate.

On one field for the exercise of the virtues

* "Hours of Christian Devotion," p. 376.

indicated we have not dwelt, though it is specially inviting, namely, the gentle, elevating, helpful influence older children can exercise over the younger. To see a young girl recognized as a "second mother" by the boys and girls whom she aids and enourages in all goodness, to see an older son so carry himself that a younger boy says, "I will not do" a mean thing "because my brother George does not think it nice"—these are attractive spectacles. Fathers and mothers are helped by such power over their children, and the furnishing of it blesses both giver and receiver.

"Among the vices there exists a mutual connection, and one easily leads to another. The three chief attractions of sin are closely related, and have a power of attraction for each other. They mutually entwine into each other like twigs of the same tree (of egoism), and grow out of each other."

CHAPTER XI.

ENEMIES OF THE HOME.

Infected walls—Poisoned atmosphere—Ruined life—"Dangerous"—"Poison"—Disorder—Some one to reflect upon—Recrimination—Home regulation—Patience with the learners—The easy descent—Children ruined—Extravagance—A bad brotherhood—Intemperance—Injury to the innocent—"Those brothers of hers"—Bonds of hospitality, chains of tyranny—The apostle's ground—Ill-temper—"A hell upon earth"—Piety at home—Not religion—Starving parents—Wide religious divergences—How to guard against them—A four-fold duty.

One of the most valuable institutions for the poor of a great city had to be closed. Its funds were ample; its officers were capable; its friends were many. Those who needed it were clamorous with the question, When will its doors be open again? The reason was that the germs of a dangerous disease had gained possession of the very plaster of the walls. They had to be stripped, scraped and replastered before the beneficiaries could be admitted without the risk of catching the fever.

A family whose members had long enjoyed

rugged health, and whose habits were promotive of its preservation, began to show signs of suffering and debility. Unaccountable languor, feverishness and debility came on one after another. An examination of the dwelling disclosed the fact that stagnant water under the foundations of the house, and which should have been carried away, poisoned the atmosphere they breathed night and day. Subtle, intangible and constant in its influence, it was doing its mischievous work, till now unnoticed and unknown. In a popular book of one of our masters in works of imagination, the peace and comfort of an able, successful and useful public man are destroyed by a calamity which he labors long and painfully to conceal from his only child. Her mother, his wife, beginning with a doctor's prescription, has become the slave of narcotics and the creature of an unprincipled pair who use her for the extortion of money for their own ends. These are illustrations of the forms in which the moral health of a family may be ruined, and misery may come to fill a home that ought to be radiant with light and fragrant with sweetness. It

may serve some good end to devote this chapter to the mention of a few of the elements of evil against which the wise will be on their watch. In our cities the word "dangerous" is sometimes displayed where unsafe buildings stand, or where preparations for building are in progress. The druggist is required to guard from accident by poisonous drugs by care in giving and in marking them. Gladly would we make our readers quick to discern, and prompt to throw off, those dangerous elements which poison the life-blood of the family and destroy the happiness of its members.

Beginning with the less perilous, *disorder* may be specified. Quiet and harmony are the product of forethought, arrangement and co-operation. If the first and second be wanting in the heads of the family, or if the third be denied by the members of it, there will be a constant loss of home enjoyment. No one can tell where a much-needed article is to be had, and each is ready to blame the other. The meals are "movable feasts," and it is difficult to time them and at the same time keep fixed engagements. So they become not feasts at all,

but scrambles where it is difficult to at once satisfy hunger and maintain good humor. There is no want, possibly; there is constant waste, perhaps; but there is no comfort. It is somebody's fault; so insinuation, reflection and recrimination destroy the flavor of the best victuals and make the family reunion a season of discord. The weak and unhappy always need some one to reflect upon, and are not always just in discrimination. If there be servants they witness, and indeed sometimes suffer from, the ill-temper. Mothers complain that they do their best, but no one is satisfied. Sons and daughters going to other family-tables where perhaps every one is on his good behavior, and where due preparation has been made for the occasion, notice and perhaps report the contrast. "Why cannot we have things as Mrs. —— has them?" "Because we have not Mrs. ——'s family to do as they are desired, and to be a little thoughtful about others," is the retort; and so the firing and cross-firing proceed where all should be peace and love.

"Order is heaven's first law," says Pope, in

another connection, and if it be disregarded in the home, it will work evil no less than in the church or in the state. Education is becoming more practical; but much is yet to be done in this direction, and no small benefit would be rendered to society by any one who would introduce into female schools elementary lessons on such practical matters as the management and regulation of the home. The married man—accustomed to have his wishes attended to by paid labor, weary in his work, perhaps, with little notion of the multiplicity of small and vexatious details to which a wife at the head of a house must attend—comes to his home and finds something other than he desired. His wife is his equal; he cannot assert his rights as he did elsewhere, but he notes and perhaps describes the contrast. "He is sorry he married me," is the instinctive thought in the weary woman's mind, and perhaps finds its way to her lips; and so where love and confidence were hoped for the blight of bitterness begins already. Men and women take a little time to learn the "way of managing;" a little patience with them is to be exercised

while they are mastering the lesson; but it is as much a duty to study and maintain order in the house as to maintain cleanliness or decorum.

The disorder is sometimes due to another bad element, for which it is difficult to find a fitting name. When the Old Testament prophet would describe a dangerous character, these are among the lineaments: "Yea also, because he transgresseth by wine, *he is* a proud man, neither keepeth at home" (Hab. 2 : 5). And when the apostle describes what the young women should be, these are among the features: "discreet, chaste, keepers at home" (Tit. 2 : 5). But when the heads of houses, male or female, are "hardly ever at home," when arrangements are left to make themselves, when the slender discretion of children or servants is trusted to settle things, it is not strange if family peace and quiet should suffer. Here it is that "society" needs to be wisely dealt with. It is conscienceless in its demands. A Christian parent sacrifices the gravest interests where "society" is permitted to occupy the time, attention and energy needed by the

family. And here it is that women need to have resources of their own in books and in womanly employments, so that it shall not be needful to rush around and draw upon the outside world for enjoyment. Many a household would be saved to truth and purity if this incapacity had not led to the search for outside enjoyments. Thus infected and unhealthy regions are visited; contagious moral diseases are contracted and carried into the dwelling. The mother cannot be "always moping at home" while such forms of enjoyment invite her outside. She states and defends her course. Her sons and her daughters have her principles, in this regard, illustrated and enforced by her example. They "better the instruction," and they are not limited by considerations of prudence and by some duties that demand her attention. What is in her a taste is in them a passion. They go further than she ever contemplated, and to her remonstrances they may reply—and in point of fact they sometimes do —"Why, we are only following where you led us. We go further than you do, you say. Oh yes! we are young, and you—well, you are

older." Many a family has had one or more of its members ruined through their steady descent on the inclined plane on which their parents, in the first instance, placed them.

It is easy to see how *extravagance* can ruin a home. Most persons living in legitimate ways (we do not include gamblers) can form a definite idea of the means which they can with prudence and propriety spend. It is commonly well to leave a margin against contingencies. Extravagance in most cases is chargeable when this estimate is exceeded. Hopeful calculations are made regarding increased means. Something is expected to turn up; the outlay of money, which is really borrowed in one form or other, is supposed to be an investment that will "pay" in other forms; and thus families are led into style and expenditure beyond their means. One or other of the joint heads of the house may have qualms about it, and even remonstrate, perhaps blaming the other, and then an element of discord is introduced. The temptation to cut off all benevolent work is irresistible, unless, indeed, a display of easy means is thought needful to cover up the actual

facts of the case. The rich possession of self-respect is meantime lost. The temptation to remedy the evil is sometimes too strong for a man, as we see by the melancholy defalcations reported in the newspapers, and the money of others is taken to meet urgent demands, or possibly to be used for rapid gains in some tempting form of speculative gambling. In a certain proportion of cases the conclusion is reached at length, "It is only a question of time when we shall break down. We may as well go on. It matters little whether the debts be nine thousand, or nineteen, or ninety —in fact the bigger the failure the less disgraceful it is, commonly." And where a crisis is avoided, and no exposure ever takes place, the evil is transmitted in many cases to the next generation. There is inability to live within the means enjoyed; and to both men and women, and the latter especially, this very incapacity is not only the way to ruin, but even the justification of it. "I could not live on the little I had, as I was brought up—what could I do?" No man has been a quarter of a century in any of the professions without

having seen tragedies too sad to be detailed, the indirect results of the bad example of parents and defective training, in this department, of their children.

The father and mother who have courage to face the facts of their life, in this regard, deserve encouragement, for

> "To the world no bugbear is so great
> As want of figure and a small estate."

Let them be able to say wisely and firmly, "We cannot afford it; so it would not be right," and they save themselves trouble; they cultivate a lawful self-respect that strengthens character; and they inspire children with a feeling that checks the beginning of many an evil. The man or woman, for example, who cannot afford to marry but for money, and who "makes a good match," has robbed life of half its richness at the very outset.*

*Many a life has been injured by the impression early made upon it that the opinion of a certain set is the guide to human conduct. Many another has been made strong and dignified by learning that "none is judge but God." The protestation of Job is worth studying by those to whom society is as deity, and "bad form" is worse than a breach of the decalogue: "Did I fear a great multitude, or did the

"He also that is slothful in his work is brother to him that is a great waster" (Prov. 18 : 9). It follows that they who would keep themselves and their children out of this bad brotherhood —of the indolent and the wasteful—will try to possess and inculcate the opposite and the positive qualities of energy, activity, industry and prudence.*

Of intemperance as the quick destroyer of home happiness little need be said in the way of argument or illustration. Disgrace, divorces, infamy for women, suicide—these are

contempt of families terrify me, that I kept silence, *and* went not out of the door?"

* One who has lived on both sides of the Atlantic, and has had his eyes open to the influences that tell on families and communities, can see and can speak of things which others do not notice or hesitate to characterize. There is growing up, especially in our cities and where "wealth accumulates and men decay," a tendency to an unreasoning, silly and mischievous imitation of the ways of "fashionable life" in the mother-countries. Horse-racing, games implying betting, forms of amusement and entertainment, public and private, which the best people of the old world deplore as corrupting and weakening, are being accepted without much question. Less than a generation will show the moral and social effects of this course—the reverse of nearly all that has contributed to American greatness.

among the salient products of this vice. In many instances the parents do not go to excess. They put no hindrance in the way of their children; and perhaps while under their eyes and roofs, no evil comes to sons or daughters. But the habit grows; dependence on stimulants is cultivated. There is perhaps a peculiarly social nature. Possibly there is, or is supposed to be, an organization that requires something invigorating. Perhaps a doctor orders it. And so before middle life has been reached the servant has become the master, and the tyranny of strong drink is seen in feebleness of mind, extravagances, waywardness and fickleness of moods, disease and death. One member of a family thus enslaved can be the skeleton in the closet to all the household. Mothers try to hide the evil. Sisters blush, fear and pity. At a later time they despise, and with good reason dislike, the brothers who, in ruining themselves, have injured them also. More than one family of amiable and capable girls has the writer known whose prospects in life were, as far as one could judge, blighted by such miserable criminals. "I like her very much; she is every-

thing one could wish; but I don't want to be brought so near those brothers of hers."

This is not the place in which to discuss the temperance question. It is proper enough for citizens to consider "prohibition;" it is a fair question for the medical men, whether on the whole stimulants do physical good; but we are not here required to defend any other ground than the apostle Paul lays down. If meat be a stumbling-block to a brother, then will he forego it (1 Cor. 8 : 13). "*It is* good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor *any thing* whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak" (Rom. 14 : 21). Granted that the application of all this was originally to questions of seeming endorsement of idolatry, the principle is no less strong when it is not "a brother" but a child; and it is not the raising of an uncomfortable religious scruple that is in question, but the forming of a habit in which the bonds of hospitality and good fellowship harden into the chains of a remorseless and life-destroying tyranny.

Ill-temper is one of the incidental attendants on drinking habits, but it sometimes exists by

itself; and it has the power to becloud the sky of families otherwise most happily situated. The father is sometimes sharp, or savage, or sullen. The mother is peevish, fault-finding, and inclined to relieve her own vexed spirit by feeble despotism among children or servants. A son has "a temper of his own." A daughter is not easily quieted if once aroused. Her tongue is keen and unrestrained. Let us pity gentle spirits bound to such tormentors. "My soul *is* among lions: *and* I lie *even among* them that are set on fire, *even* the sons of men, whose teeth *are* spears and arrows, and their tongue a sharp sword." This is the Psalmist's language. If any one deems it querulous exaggeration, he does not know human nature. To the present writer an educated woman, unmarried, in middle life and in good society, living with her father, sister and stepmother, having to make some statements lost control of her conventional self, and when some consolatory reference was made to her home—"Home!" she exclaimed with flashing eye; "my home is just a hell upon earth."

Allied in some degree to this sad defect is

the want of "piety at home" (1 Tim. 5 : 4). Our readers do not need to be reminded that it is not religion, as such, that is here urged, but the practical gratitude that cares for aged or infirm or needy parents, as the connection shows. "If any widow hath children or grandchildren, let them learn first to show piety towards their own family, and to requite their parents."* Allusion has been made already to this duty, and we do not here dwell on it except to say that it is never discharged by mere gifts in money or supply of material comforts, good as these are in their place. "I have rendered to every one his due," says one who never had a bill protested, never was in a law-court, and never wronged a man in money. Ah! have you given to father and mother the gentle confidences, the tender love, they used to give to you? or, asserting early that strong individualism of yours, have you gone on your way, even while under their roof, as though they were to you only business connections? If you have done this, my dear sir, you have robbed those who had the first and the strongest

* Revised Version.

claim upon you of those treasures of sympathy, fellowship and responsive affection of which no bank takes account, and which no money can purchase. They have been all along kind and considerate to you, for they loved you and they wanted to do their whole duty, even when they were craving with an insatiable hunger for tenderness and trustful feeling—the true nutriment of human hearts. Of children who enjoy ease and leave parents in want, it is not needful here to speak. Their case needs no exposure.

One other source of disquietude is sometimes opened up in a home through wide religious divergence on the part of a member of the family. Take a case—not standing alone by any means—in the observation of the writer. A youth has among his acquaintances a very zealous and very attractive family of Roman Catholics. He inquires; is shown their views of religious life; is brought into intercourse with a leader of well-used powers in polemics; and goes into the matter in that state of mind, so common in our American life, that knows no particular reason for being Protestant, and that

counts it narrow to think badly of any religion. Step by step he advances until he formally accepts the new faith, renounces, in secret indeed, his family's, and holds his peace on the matter till an accident discloses the facts. Thenceforward a chasm lies between him and his family. The subject is never mentioned. He goes his way; the rest go theirs. The most that can be said is that there is a truce on the matter. There is none of the unity in which it is good and pleasant for brethren to dwell.

If one asks what can be done to guard against such an alienation, the direction in reply must include four things. Give your children competent instruction in the faith you hold; teach them why they are to hold it; illustrate and commend it by your own consistent life; and finally, keep a wise and watchful oversight of the associations and companionships of those for whose training you are answerable before conscience, before the world and before the God of the families of all the earth.

"It matters little what hour o' the day
The righteous falls asleep; death cannot come
To him untimely who is fit to die;
The less of the cold earth, the more of heaven;
The briefer life, the longer immortality."

CHAPTER XII.

OUR FATHER'S HOUSE, THE HEAVENLY HOME.

Secularism—Christians the true friends of the age—The real liberals—"Free thought"—Believers have evidence—Appropriate—Adequate—Free living—Revelation made the home—The natural craving—The adequate supply—Fountain forsaken—Broken cisterns set up—Their defect—The great mutual benefit society—Terms of admission—"Come"—Education in what?—Unity of this life and the next—"Plots of heaven"—Two forms of connection—Gloom below—Light above—"Light affliction"—Weight of glory—Preparation for enjoyment of heaven—Recognition in heaven.

THE reader who has kindly accompanied the writer thus far in an humble effort to promote domestic goodness and purity will be disappointed if a touching and eloquent exhibition of heavenly life is expected in this final chapter. There is no such object before the writer's mind. We confine ourselves to the theme in hand, and point reverently toward heaven as the great theme comes into the discussion of our subject. It has been dealt with by other and more competent authorities. Its essential glories, its contrasts with the limitations of the

present. its high employments, its holy enjoyments—these have employed the minds and cheered the hearts of multitudes. We think now of heaven as it rises before the view of one occupied with the right regulation of the home on earth, and we would fain remove the mischievous impression that religion is largely sentimental and speculative, that Christian hope is dreamy, and that something more directly practical and more closely bearing on every-day life is needed than New Testament piety furnishes. Let us look at some of the forms in which this unfair view has been suggested.

(1) An Englishman still living and possessing much influence with the working classes, from his life-long efforts in their behalf, may be credited with the introduction of the word "secularism." Denying that we have any ground for positive belief in the unseen, he aimed at the formation of a code of life, apart from theology, influenced by which men would do their duty. Duty, and not the pursuit of happiness, he makes the end of life, and utility the test of right. He hoped to give men a rule of conduct founded on science and experience,

through observance of which a state of things would be reached in which it would be impossible for man to be poor or depraved, and in which men should act so well as to deserve another life, if there be one. The aim is to lift up the world by forces entirely within the world itself, and so to benefit the age.*

Apart from the impossibility of doing this in the nature of things, it is not too much to say that Christianity furnishes the true secularism. It inspires to the doing of duty. It furnishes the perfect rule. It teaches its adherents to serve their generation (Acts 13: 36). It produces the pure family, and so finds the material for good citizens. It elevates from poverty, and cheers it where it is inevitable. It reaches the seat of human depravity with its offer of the new heart and the right spirit. It finds for the moral world what the great geometrician desired in order that he might

* There is, along with truth, an approach to wit in the statement of Canon Liddon: "That man should raise himself was, in the moral order, just as impossible as it is, physically, beyond the power of the most accomplished athlete to lift himself from the earth by the waistband."—*University Sermons, Second Series*, p. 187.

move the material, and what secularism lacks —both fulcrum and lever sufficient for its elevation. The intelligent and faithful Christian is the true secularist. He aids and purifies this world by bringing it "under the power of the world to come."

(2) It has become common for a class of self-complacent teachers to compliment themselves as liberal, and to commend their views by this adjective. They would insinuate that Christians are enslaved by revelation, of which they are fond of speaking as "dogma." Well, "dogma" is a word brought into bad odor by being applied to the decisions of mediæval councils; but it had an earlier classic meaning. It stood for a philosophic tenet. It is found, without the change of a letter, in the Greek Testament, to describe a prince's decree (Acts 17 : 7), the apostolic resolutions (Acts 16 : 4), the Mosaic laws (Eph. 2 : 15); and in the apostolic fathers it stands for "the doctrines of the Lord and the apostles."* Is there any more

* Ignatius to the Magnesians, chap. xiii. The controversy regarding the genuineness of the Epistles does not affect the value of our quotation, as showing the early use of the word.

bondage in being under these doctrines than being under the law of gravitation? Is the mind any more fettered by accepting revealed truth in moral or spiritual things than by accepting the fixed elementary principles of mathematics? On the contrary it is the mind that divine truth enlightens that is liberal; that is brought into sympathy with the Father of lights; that realizes its place in humanity and in the universe; and that feels itself bound in all proper ways to do good to all as it has opportunity. It is lifted out of and above self. It is brought into the family of God. It catches the spirit of a true catholicity. It rises in love, pity and effort to do good above the lines of color, race, class; and it anticipates a common home with the redeemed out of every kindred and tongue and nation and people. In every just sense of the word the intelligent Christian is the true liberal.

(3) We do not, therefore, hold in any special respect the idea involved in "free thought" —a phrase employed to describe disregard of the restraints of the Bible. In what distinctive sense is such thought free? Is it meant

that it disregards evidence? Surely not. It claims to stand up rigidly for evidence. But so do Christians. They are bidden to "prove all things" (1 Thess. 5 : 21). They are appealed to by evidence. God has supplied "many infallible proofs" (Acts 1 : 3) of a decisive fact in the Christian system. Christians believe on evidence; on appropriate evidence; on evidence kindred to the point to be proved. Moral questions are dealt with by moral considerations, physical by physical, and spiritual by spiritual. Christianity in its nature, and of necessity, liberates the human mind. It has done so in point of fact. If "the truth" (John 8 : 32), or, which is the same thing, "if the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed" (John 8 : 36).

We have dwelt on these pretentious phrases at a length that would be needless if they did not bear in some degree on the great aim of this little book, the building up of godly, happy homes. As a man "thinketh in his heart, so is he." "Free thought" is not far removed from free living, "free love" and other radical foes of home life. Nature, experience, science,

philosophy, all failed to produce the true family life. It is the fruit of revelation. Destroy the power of revelation over men's minds and you throw back society into the conditions of Greece and Rome in pre-Christian times,—not to speak of lower depths.

One other point, kindred to this, deserves notice. The Creator gave us social instincts. He implants the yearning for social affection, for a sharer of our joys, a helper, as we bear the burden of inevitable sorrows. As there are dwarfs, giants and albinos, so there are exceptional natures that, Diogenes-like, prefer to be left alone; but the rest can truly say,

> "We pine for kindred natures
> To mingle with our own."

God's institutions—the family, the church, the state—meet and utilize these elements in our nature. But there are many who, for various reasons, stand in a measure outside the first and the second of these. Are they superior to the common demands? By no means. Look at our cities with their "clubs," "unions," "societies," "circles" and the like, more or less rational, pure, and expensive. Many of

them are more costly and less elevating to their members than a church. All of them constitute the unconscious confession that if human nature does not take God's provisions for it, it must find something in their stead; and the weakness of its clumsy make-shifts is that the fellowship they cultivate has no direct, no specific reach beyond the present. But in the Christian home and the church of our Lord we enter into and cultivate a communion that endures with our immortal being, a fellowship that will be unbroken and eternal in the Father's house. Where is the word of welcome uttered to the newly initiated that can compare for a moment with this?—"Ye are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better than *that* of Abel" (Heb. 12 : 22–24, Revision). By whom are they led thither? The Spirit of

the living God (Rom. 8 : 14). In what capacity do they come? As sons of the living God. By whom are they introduced? Their Saviour and Elder Brother. Is there any entrance fee? No: "without money and without price." Have they any privileges? Yes: "all things are yours." Do they receive sympathy? "Little children, love one another." Is any mutual improvement contemplated? "Edify one another" (1 Thess. 5 : 11). Is there any mutual benefit? Yes; each is bound to do good to all, especially unto them of the household of faith (Gal. 6 : 10). Is the management liberal and peaceable? "In Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace *be* on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God." Is there any provision for the members? Oh, reader, if you have not become joined to the Lord "in a perpetual covenant *that* shall not be forgotten" (Jer. 50 : 5)—if you have taken up this book from curiosity and not from interest in its theme—let its pages be a call to you to come to Christ and so into his church, to trust him for

what he is, for what you need, and to be his in heart, profession and life. Then you will have a future, and an adequate provision for your whole nature, for your sympathies, your soul, your glorified body. For hear the Redeemer's words—covering all the case, all this life's troubles and the wants of the next: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if *it were* not *so* I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you unto myself; that where I am, *there* ye may be also" (John 14 : 1–3).

There is a natural connection between education in youth and the work of life. Wise persons aim at exercising the mind in what will most employ it through life. One sometimes hears a person—employed in some department of effort he never contemplated—say, "I threw away my school-time. What I learnt has nothing to do with my occupation now." When this life is the school-time and the endless future is the real life, surely it is wise to regulate the one by the other. To serve God;

to grow up in his family; to catch the spirit of it; to be at peace with him and at ease with his children; to feel "at home" in his service and with his people; to have feelings and affections stamped with the heavenly-mindedness which is the family likeness—this links together earth and heaven; gives unity to the life here and the life to come; and lends dignity to a being which to the eye of sense is fleeting as the shadow, and withers like the grass. For—on this plan—"whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's" (Rom. 14 : 8). "Oh! strive then," says the Rev. George Everard in quaint language that savors of Herbert, or of Puritan pages, "to make your home a little plot of heaven, a nursery for the great home above. Let your walls be built of salvation, your floors carpeted with meekness and humility; let your light be the lamp of God's word; let the fire burning on your hearth be love to God and love to one another, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit; let your furniture be made of the fragrant wood

of genuine sincerity and holy living; let your gates and doors be fervent prayers to shut out all that is evil, and to guard and cherish all that is pure and good; let the windows be minds enlightened by divine grace to learn the secrets of heavenly wisdom; let the motto engraven on your house be something of this kind: 'Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it.'"

There are two forms in which we should, in our minds, connect the home on earth and the home above. There are in the happiest homes unavoidable breaks in the stream of enjoyment, difficulties in finding the means of life; or if not these, occasional disappointments—in the field, or the fold, or the store, or the bank—are experienced. How many households are there to which the death of one of the cattle is a serious loss! Sickness comes, on a child perhaps, and a parent toils all day and watches all night; on a parent perhaps, and for the time the future of the family is in peril. Death comes; an infant, a growing boy, a little sister, a mother, dies. But there is the abiding conviction: "We are being made meet for a home

without any trials. We need these here; whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth. The very remembrance of his wisdom, grace and power will give fervor to our song above, and the contrast between that and this will enhance the joy and the glory. And as for our beloved ones, they are before us. We shall join them by and by." These convictions quiet, comfort, strengthen. Along with them despondency, bitter complaint and vexation with providences cannot live.

Take an example. On a bright summer day it was my duty to visit, in their affliction, a Protestant family living in comparative isolation and poverty among a population of a different faith. The mother lay on the bed sick of a fever. The father took it while nursing her; held out till he could stand no longer; and then the children, none of them full-grown, made a cot for him on the floor beside her. Which of the two would go first it was impossible to guess. Want awaited the family; in fact it was there. But they had Christian faith and hope. The father could not rise from the cot, but he could quote Bible texts. He could speak of

going home, and of their being joined together again. After such words as it was fit to speak, and such brief prayer as they could follow, I left to find some needed attendance and comforts. The home was poor, dark and comfortless. The place—with a few scattered dwellings about it—was dreary in the extreme; but looking up, a clear sky, a bright sun, a balmy atmosphere recalled to me

> "How strikingly the course of nature tells,
> By its light heed of human suffering,
> That it was fashioned for a happier world."

But there came a second thought; over that darkened dwelling grace had revealed a fairer heaven with a serener atmosphere, all the more glorious to faith from contrast with the gloom below, and, breathing which forever none shall say, "I am sick."

Oh, reader, it is hard to see loved ones suffer and die; it is hard to lie on one's bed and feel that this familiar world is vanishing; it is hard to nature to part with those whose life has been part of our life. This experience will inevitably be yours in some form or other. Can you calmly think of endless parting? of dying

and going out into an unknown world hopeless and homeless? Or do you put the idea away from your mind? That poor shift will not alter the facts. Rather consider, believe, and then learn to "endure as seeing him who is invisible." It is while we look not at the things seen but the things unseen that the light and momentary affliction works out the far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory (2 Cor. 4 : 17, 18).

Nor are we to overlook another truth: the exercise of the graces that sweeten and brighten the home is a preparation for the life above. Do you obey the father whom you see because he is your father? You are forming the habit of obedience to your divine Father. Do you love those who are one with you with a patient, gentle, appreciative affection? You are acquiring the temper and feeling that will make heaven happy to you. Are you gladdened by the joy of your kindred, even as your sympathies draw you towards them when they weep? Then how happy you will be when among the great multitude that no man can number, in perfected bliss, and when you

feel yourself one of the family of God! Do you rejoice in the gifts and graces of those with whom you mingle daily? How rich the satisfaction with which you will look on the powers of angels who have kept their first estate! Have you ever had unexpected joy in coming close to those of your own flesh and blood whom you had hardly known? What varied and fresh delight you are preparing yourself to enjoy when "father Abraham" is met; when prophets and apostles are greeted; when saints whose names you knew as the world's benefactors cross your path; when forefathers whose example, influence and prayers told on you, though you never saw them in the body, come within your ever-widening world! The genuine home-life is a force that steadily counteracts selfishness, widens the nature, purifies and elevates the best of our sympathies and affections, and so prepares us for enjoying the society of the family of God in heaven.

It will be noticed that we assume recognition in heaven. It does not need to be argued. It is implied in the nature of the case. To doubt it is to deny the individuality God gives to

men; to suppose diminution, not increase, of our knowledge, and to rob of their force such words as "ye shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob," and "all the prophets." It is to reverse arrangements God made on the earth, and to sunder ties which first his providence, and then his grace, created. But this he does not. Many a joyous recognition in glory will yield a thousand-fold compensation for trials, labors and sacrifices on earth.

> "Oh, when the mother meets on high
> The babe she lost in infancy,
> Hath she not then for all her fears,
> The day of care, the anxious night—
> For all her sorrows, all her tears—
> An over-payment of delight?"

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